Rashi on II Chronicles
רש"י על דברי הימים ב
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Rashi on II Chronicles

Chapter 1

Verse 1

And Solomon strengthened himself because the Lord his God was with him.

Verse 2

And Solomon said to all Israel And who were those referred to as "all Israel"? They were the leaders of the thousands, as it is written (I Chron. 28:1): "And David assembled all the leaders of Israel." And what did he say to them? That they should come with him to the high place that was in Gibeon.

Verse 3

And Solomon and the entire assembly with him, etc. It is customary for Scripture to abbreviate, [as we find:] (Jonah 2:11): "And the Lord said to the fish, and it spewed Jonah onto the dry land," and similarly (I Chron. 21:27): "And the Lord said to the angel, and his sword was returned to its sheath."

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

Request, what shall I give you Choose and request all that you desire, and I shall grant it to you.

Verse 8

Verse 9

Now, O Lord God, may...come true - Heb. וְאֶתָּן, (provarsi in Italian), to prove (true).
for You have enthroned me Since You have enthroned me over a numerous people like this, I require wisdom and strength to go forth before them and to wage their wars, as it is stated (I Samuel 8:20): "and our king will judge us and wage our wars." Now since I must ask what is in my heart, I shall ask what I require and that is that You grant me wisdom.

Verse 10

and I shall go forth before this people and come in And also, a king requires a wise heart to know how to judge, and I am young and tender. Even a thousand wise men would have difficulty judging such a large nation, because it is impossible that they should not have many disputes, which they come to litigate, and he has no time to deliberate on their case, for while this one is complaining and does not stop talking, another one comes and cries. Now who can decide a thousand legal decisions in one day, except one who is wise and astute, endowed with the spirit of God? Therefore, this I request, that You give me wisdom and knowledge to judge this great people of Yours, for this is what I require that You give me.

Verse 11

Since this was in your heart For a person does not request this thing unless he has the fear of Heaven in his heart, as it is stated (Ex. 18:21): "But you must seek out from the people men of ability, God-fearing men."
the life of your enemies to defeat them.

Verse 12

Wisdom and knowledge are granted you that which you requested.
and riches, possessions, and honor which you did not request, I shall grant you.
such as that the kings before you did not possess and which will not be so after you This refers back to "riches and honor" which you did not request, because the wisdom that I am granting you: riches, honor, and longevity, are dependent on it, as it is written (Prov. 3:16): "Length of days in its right hand; and in its left hand, riches and honor." This is what is written (I Kings 10:23): Now King Solomon transcended all the kings of the earth in affluence and wisdom, etc."

Verse 13

Verse 14

and he left them in the chariot cities He left some of those horsemen and chariots in the chariot cities; since the king's chariots were there, those cities were called the chariot cities, and some of them he left with him in Jerusalem.

Verse 15

like stones Because of the abundance of silver and gold that he had, he was not particular about distributing silver and gold throughout the city to make tables and chairs. Our Rabbis said (Ecc. Rabbah 2:3): Like

stones of ten or eight cubits: just as he cut stones, so did he cut silver.

Verse 16

And Solomon’s source of horses i.e., Solomon’s entire source of horses was exclusively from Egypt.
and [there was] an assemblage from which the king’s agents - Heb. מִקְוֵה, the assemblage of the horses in Egypt, and it is called stutte in Middle High German.

Chapter 2

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

to devote to Him for some purpose.
to burn before Him incense which is a way of honor[ing Him], and this is repeated further (verse 5): “but to burn incense before Him.”
making this permanent over Israel Therefore, I request of you to send to me [material] for a good and strong House, because it is required perpetually for Israel to offer up their sacrifice(s) in this House, which I am building.

Verse 4

And the House, which I am building, is great Therefore, I require of you to send me of your buildings. Now if you say, “Make the House smaller, so that you will not need other people,” I cannot do so, because our God is greater than all Gods; therefore, I cannot diminish it or make it smaller.

Verse 5

And who can gather up strength to build Him a house Since he said, “And the House which I am building is great,” perhaps [you may think that] this will mean “great enough for His needs,” but this is not so, for “who can gather strength?” For who can compress and gather his strength enough to build a house fit for Him? An example of this appears above (I Chron. 29:14): “that we should gather up strength to donate.”
for the heavens and the heavens of the heavens cannot contain Him Therefore, he says, “and who am I, to build Him a House?” And that which I am building Him is nothing more than to burn incense therein before Him.

Verse 6

and with purple אַרְגְּוָן. This is synonymous with אַרְגָּמָן.
and crimson כַּרְמִיל. This is תּוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי. The proof is that תּוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי is not mentioned here.

and who knows how to make engravings Heb. לְפַתֵּחַ פִּתּוּחִים. An example is (Ex. 28:36) פִּתּוּחֵי חוֹתָם, the engravings of a signet; someone who knows how to cut and make forms in stones, graber or greber in Middle German.

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Abundant wheat - Heb. מָכוֹת, in Middle High German vollauff, in abundance, and some say that מָכוֹת means crushed to extract the wheat kernels from the ear.
and wine twenty thousand baths The expression of bath refers to a liquid measure, and kor is a dry measure.

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

endowed with understanding, of my father Huram He was my father's ingenious craftsman, and he is also mine.

Verse 13

the son of a woman She was a widow.
of the daughters of Dan of the tribe of Dan.
and his father was a Tyrian man He was a Jew who lived in Tyre, on the model of (II Sam. 6:10): "Obed-Edom the Gittite," who lived in Gath, and who was a Levite. In I Kings (7:14), it is written: "He was a widow's son, of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a Tyrian man." His mother was from Dan, and his father was from Naphtali. Now why was it necessary to trace his genealogy, from which tribe his father and mother were? This is what is written (Gen. 30:6): "God judged me," and also (ibid. 8): "I have fought a divine struggle, etc." Rachel said, "I twisted cords; I went through contortions until I was able to compare to my sister Leah. If Leah will boast of her descendant Bezalel, who will make the Tabernacle, he will require one of the sons of Dan to participate in his work, as it is written (38: 23): 'And with him was Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan.' Now if Solomon, the descendant of my sister, will build the Temple, some of the sons of Dan and Naphtali will have to participate with him."
and his father was a Tyrian man [This comes] to teach you that even if his mother is a widow, a person must adopt his father's trade and sustain his mother. (So I heard from Rabbi Solomon the son of Levi of Monteuille, the son of Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan's sister.)

Verse 14

Verse 15

as rafts - Heb. רַפְסֹדוֹת, and in I Kings (5:23) it is written: דִּבְרוֹת, in Middle High German vloeze, rafts, (in modern German flüsse).
on the sea of Joppa meaning on the seacoast, like (Jonah 1:3): "and he went down to Joppa."

Verse 16

And Solomon counted all the strangers who were in the land of Israel - Heb. הַגֵּירִים. This is written with the plene spelling, two yuds. In the beginning, when David counted them (I Chron 22:2), they were called הַגָּרִים with one yud, but Solomon counted them at the time of the deed, when he built; therefore, it is written with the plene spelling. A similar instance: "then you shall bring up my bones from this place." "With you" is missing in the portion of וַיְהִי (Gen. 50:25), but at the time of the deed (in the portion of בְּשַׁלַּח, Ex. 13:19), when he took them, it is written: "with you."
And Solomon counted, etc., after the census above (I Chron. 22:2), as it is written: "And David ordered to gather the strangers."

Verse 17

And he made of them seventy thousand, etc. The reason he mentions them again and mentions the number is that he interrupted the topic; therefore, he had to repeat it again now. And he did not stop until he finished the entire [account of the] building, and he says immediately (3:1): "And Solomon commenced to build, etc." Now, even with one verse, it is customary to interrupt the topic and [then] to begin [again] with the previous statement, e.g., (Num. 16:6): "Do this: take yourself, etc." And the morrow, it says (ibid. 16f.): "And Moses said to Korah: You and all your band, etc.," and he repeats and says, "and let each man take his censer and place, etc." Since he interrupted with many verses, it was necessary to rewrite it, and how much more so here.

Chapter 3

Verse 1

on Mount Moriah because the Holy One, blessed be He, appeared to David in the threshing floor of Ornan when the plague stopped, and that is Mount Moriah, David's place.

Verse 2

And he commenced to build in the second month This is explained at the beginning of Tractate Rosh Hashanah Yerushalmi (1:1), and the meaning is: the second of Iyar. Since he wished to say, "in the fourth year of his reign," he had to repeat and say, "in the second." A similar instance is (Gen. 8: 5): "And the waters continued to diminish until the tenth month, etc." Another similar instance is (I Kings 6:1): "in the fourth year in the month Ziv, which was the second month of Solomon's reign, etc." This refers back to "the fourth year," and then in the fourth year of his reign he commenced in the second [month], because all the days of the winter he could not [build] because of the cold, and in Nissan he could not [build] because of Passover.

Verse 3

the length in cubits, in the first measure And since he interrupted and said “in the first measure,” he says again, “cubits,” i.e., the cubit length of the House was sixty cubits, including the Debir and the Heichal, and the breadth was twenty cubits.

Verse 4

And the vestibule, the length of which was The length of the vestibule, opposite the breadth of the House, was twenty, for the length of the vestibule, which was opposite the breadth of the House, was twenty cubits from north to south, and every larger dimension is called length, and the smaller one is called breadth, and since in the Heichal, its measurement from east to west is larger and from north to south is smaller, it is called the breadth, but in the vestibule, whose measurement from north to south is larger, it is called the length, and its measurement from east to west, which is smaller, is called the breadth, and the breadth of the vestibule was ten cubits, as is delineated in I Kings (6:3): “ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the House.”
and the height was one hundred and twenty But in I Kings (6:2), it is written: “and thirty cubits the height thereof.” How so? The height of the [first] floor from the floor of the house to the ceiling of the first upper story was thirty cubits, and from upper story to upper story up to the highest roof was ninety cubits, as is written: (I Chron. 28:11): “And David gave his son Solomon the pattern of the vestibule and its houses and its treasures and its upper stories.” From there it can be deduced that there were upper stories there.
and he overlaid it from within with pure gold The inside of the Heichal, which was the greater house, he overlaid with gold, but not the vestibule, and he proceeds and delineates further how he did it. And the greater House He overlaid the entire House with pure gold. he overlaid with juniper wood - Heb. עֲצֵי בְרוֹשִׁים. [This translation follows Yehuda Feliks, Nature & Man in the Bible, pp.110f.] For the entire House, the Debir and the Heichal, he first overlaid with juniper wood, and afterwards, “he overlaid it with fine gold” over the walls of juniper, and because of the overlaying of gold, with which he wished to overlay the House, he overlaid it first with wood in order that the gold would adhere firmly, for he would reinforce the gold with nails, with the decorations of the wood, for he made decorations in the wood. palm trees - Heb. תְּמָרִים. They are trees like a sort of palm trees and cherubim, and in I Kings (6:32) it is written: “and he carved upon them carvings of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers (וּפְטוּרֵי צָצִים),” like (Num. 17:23) “and it sprouted fruit (וַיֹּצֵץ צִיץ)”. And פְּטוּרֵי is like “A man frees (פּוֹטֵר) his wife (entwerfen in Middle High German). (From Rabbi Eliezer the son of Rabbi Meshullam of blessed memory.)

Verse 5

and he overlaid it with gold i.e., When he made all the decorations, he overlaid the walls with gold after the decorations, and he reinforced them with nails in the wooden wall, in order that it should not move; which is something that he could not do on a stone wall. For this reason, he overlaid the entire House with juniper wood.
and chains He made many decorations, filling it completely, and when he saw that there was any blank space between one decoration and another, he painted a decoration like a sort of chain, with which things are connected, so did he do here between one decoration and another, in order that there should be no blank space in between. Another interpretation is

that he made real golden chains and connected the shapes together with them.

Verse 6

And he overlaid the House with precious stone He set and inlaid precious stones in gold in the walls of the House for glory and for beauty.
and the gold that he refers to: "and he overlaid it with fine gold," was of the gold of Parvaim. Parvaim is the name of a place, and our Sages explained that it resembles the blood of bulls in its high quality and its redness.

Verse 7

And he overlaid - Heb. וַיְצַף like וַיְצַף, and he explains what he overlaid in the Housethe walls and the sideposts.
and its walls [i.e., the walls] of the sideposts of the House, which were [made] of stones, and he explains: "its walls and its doors with gold." In I Kings (6:15) it says: "until the walls of the ceiling (קִירוֹת הַסְּפָן)." Now this is why he calls the roof קִירוֹת הַסְּפָן, because the roof was like an inverted ship (סְפִינָה) or boat, for it is customary to make the ceiling round, like a ship.

Verse 8

And he made the House of, etc. This is what he should have said: "And he made the house of the Holy of Holies twenty by twenty," [since neither side was longer] but because he said above (verse 4): "And the vestibule, etc. opposite the breadth of the House, was twenty cubits, etc.," he words it similarly here.
and he overlaid it with fine gold Also in the Holy of Holies, he first built walls of wood, and upon it he overlaid gold, and the reason he does not mention any wood here in the Holy of Holies is due to the greatness of the Temple; i.e., all the walls of the House of the Ark were of gold, and there was no wood in them, and that was honor for the Holy of Holies, and this is proven in Kings (ad loc.). The proof that because of the honor of the House he does not mention any wood is that it is written (verse 6): "And he overlaid the House with precious stone," whereas in Kings, it is not written: "precious stone." Why not? Because in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah he lets you know that Solomon's intention was for the honor of the House.

Verse 9

And the weight of the nails to reinforce with them the gold on the wooden walls.
in shekels in the weight of shekels, fifty shekels of gold.

Verse 10

with the appearance of children - Heb. צַעֲצָעִים. A similar instance is (Isa. 22:24): הַצָּאֱצָאִים וְהַצְּפִעוֹת, which is translated by the Targum as: the children, etc. He made the form of boys and girls for cherubim, [based on the Aramaic] כְּרֵבְיָא, [meaning like children,] and they were of wood, which he afterwards overlaid with gold, and in I Kings (6:23): "And he made in the Debir two cherubim of olive wood," but all that was within of wood he does not wish to mention in this Book because of its honor.

Verse 11

And the wings of the cherubim - their length was twenty cubits How so? The wing of one was five cubits, and the end of the five reached the wall of the House to the south, and the other wing reached the wing of the other cherub, which was at its side, totaling ten cubits for one cherub, and so for the other one. It is found that the wing of one cherub reached the north, and the wing of one cherub reached the south. It follows that they were as long as the entire western wall, which was twenty cubits [long]. And concerning their bodies, our Sages said, (Yoma 21a), that they stood miraculously, [i.e., they did not occupy space]. But according to the simple explanation of the matter, it appears to me that their bodies protruded from them like a bird which spreads its wings, that its body protrudes outside its wings, (See B.B. 99a) and their height is delineated in I Kings (6:26): "The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was that of the second cherub."

Verse 12

Verse 13

standing on their feet on the floor of the House to the west.
with their faces to the House To the inside, for their heads were not erect, so that they should appear as though looking outward, but their heads were bent and looking before them, as it is written (Exod. 25:20): "and their faces [shall be] one toward the other," but here it says. "with their faces to the House," but rather their heads were facing each other, and their heads were also bent toward the House, toward the inside, and the Ark was standing in the place of the wing spread of the two cherubim, and the wings of the cherubim were inclined from the wall and shielded the Ark cover and the Ark with their wings. Aside from these cherubim were the cherubim that Moses had made from the Ark cover, still attached and clinging to the Ark cover and standing upon it. Do not be surprised about this, because likewise, Solomon made ten tables and ten candelabra, besides those of Moses.

Verse 14

And he made the dividing curtain of blue, purple and he hung it on the door that was in the cubit between the two partitions, through which they would enter the Holy of Holies. Although it had doors, he hung it upon it as further (4:22): "And the entrance to the House, its inner doors to the Holy of Holies, etc."
and he wrought cherubim into it pictures of cherubim.

Verse 15

thirty-five cubits long i.e., the height. And in I Kings (7:15): "And he cast the two pillars of copper, eighteen cubits, etc." Rabbi Solomon (Rashi to Kings) explained that he cast them both together and subsequently divided them in two, and the missing cubit is not counted because it is unlike the work of the rest of the pillar, as is written there in the section (7:22): "And upon the top of the pillars was lily work." Rabbi Joseph [Kara] also explained it in this manner, but it is not acceptable to me, for what is the meaning of its height being eighteen, but this is how I heard it, that he surely cast them both together, and then divided them in two; so we find that each one was seventeen and a half cubits, and the capital, which was the chapiter, as is stated there, its thickness was half a cubit, making each one eighteen cubits.

and the capital - Heb. וְהַעֶפֶת. That is the overlay (צִפּוּי) like (verse 10): "and he (sic) overlaid them (וְיִצְּפָהּ) with gold." I.e., it was made like a sort of hollow (conical) hat, whose thickness was half of a cubit from below, and when it is inverted and placed on the pillar, it is found to be eighteen cubits: in I Kings (7:16-20), it is called chapiters (כֹּתָרוֹת), an expression of a crown (כֶּתֶר), as it is written: "And two chapiters (כֹּתָרוֹת), etc."

Verse 16

and placed them in the chains He made chains at the top of the capital under it, and within the chains he set forms of pomegranates in order to cover the hollow of the capital, as it is written (ibid. verse 41): "to cover the two bowls (גֻּלּוֹת) of the chapiters," and because of its hollow, he calls them גֻּלּוֹת. And concerning the net-work (שְׂבָכָה) written there, these are the chains, an expression of (Job 18:8): "and he shall walk on the nets (שְׂבָכָה)," an expression of branches, like (Gen. 22:13): "caught in the hedge (בַּסְּבַךְ) by its horns." Some interpret it as coif, and Rabbi Eliezer interprets it as branches.

Verse 17

before the Heichal At the entrance of the Heichal on the outside, in the vestibule, as is proven in I Kings (7:19): "And the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars were of lily work in the vestibule."
one from the right of the entrance.
and one from the left of the entrance.
Jachin, etc. Boaz Jachin because of the kingdom of the house of David, which was compared to the moon, as it is written (Ps. 89:38): "Like the moon, which is established (יִכּוֹן) forever."
Boaz, corresponding to the sun, [which emerges with might and strength (עֹז) (Yesod Veshoresh Haavodah)], as it is written (ibid. 19: 6): "it rejoices like a mighty man, running," (Midrassh Tadshe, ch. 2). The "beth" of בְּעֹז is like the "mem" in (Gen. 5:29) מִן יְגֵעֵנוּ and in (I Sam 1:20) שְׁמוּאֵל כִּי מֵה' שְׁאִלְתִּיו.
and he named the right one Jachin although the moon is smaller than the sun, i.e., that it shou ld help him like an established moon, but not like a diminishing moon. Said Solomon, "If the Holy One, blessed be He, compares my kingdom to the sun and the moon, I too shall make an established and enduring thing, namely, large copper pillars." Another explanation: Huram, who was one of the sons of Dan, made the pillars. He called one Jachin after his father Samson, about whom Scripture states (Jud. 16:29): "And Samson grasped the two pillars of the center, etc." And Solomon called the second one Boaz after his grandfather, Boaz. A similar instance is (Gen. 31:47): "And Laban called it Yegar Sahadutha."

Chapter 4

Verse 1

Verse 2

ten cubits from brim to brim Ten by ten in its center, circular around. and a line of thirty cubits did encompass it round about Whatever has a circumference of three handbreadths has a diameter of one handbreadth. and the height thereof was five cubits its depth.

Verse 3

And the likeness of oxen was beneath it And he cast the forms of the likeness of oxen from it to stand upon, and they were fastened to it, as is stated at the end of the verse: "The oxen were cast when it was cast."
round about, encompassing it; ten cubits encompassing the sea It is not elucidated here what the thing that encompassed them was, but in I Kings (7:24) it is written: "And under the brim were ornamental knobs encompassing it round about, for ten cubits, encompassing the sea round about." Knobs are like those made for cups, round pomels (apple-shaped) knobs, for the sake of beauty, and beneath its brim and round about, they stood in the three lowest cubits, which were square, and the two round upper ones. And it is impossible to contain [that which Scripture says] (ibid. verse 26): "it contained two thousand bath," which are the equivalent of one hundred fifty purifying pools, except in this matter, as is delineated in Erubin (13a). And it is impossible to say that the upper ones were square and the lower ones were round, because that which is written: "it was round all about," refers to its brim, and that which Scripture states about these knobs, "ten cubits" on each side, but where it was round, it is impossible to say, "ten cubits around."
two rows the knobs were cast when it was cast;
all were cast together, not that he attached the knobs after its casting, with nails or with glue, called soldure in Old French, soldering.

Verse 4

and all their hind parts were inward The hind parts of all these oxen were facing inward (to) their bottom; those in the north their hind parts were facing opposite those in the south, and those in the east opposite those in the west.

Verse 5

And its thickness was a handbreadth [i.e.] its bottom and its walls, but at its mouth it was thin, spread out and flattened.
like the work of the brim of a cup used for drinking, upon which is depicted a lily flower.
it contained three thousand It contained this amount, but in I Kings (7:26) it is written: "It contained two thousand baths." The heaped measure was a third, for a bath is three seah, as is said: (Ezek. 45:11): "The ephah and the bath shall have one volume." Thus you have six thousand seah. This equals a hundred and fifty purifying pools for four thousand seah equal a hundred mikvaoth. And we find also for the remaining two thousand seah fifty mikvaoth, and even if you divide the vessel according to the measure that the Rabbis computed, namely a cubit by a cubit by the height of three cubits for a mikvah, you will find the same: for the height of three cubits, which was square, and which was ten by ten from its brim to its brim, are a hundred mikvaoth, and for the height of two cubits, where it was round, ten by ten from its brim to its brim around equal fifty mikvaoth, because a square is a fourth more than a circle.

Verse 6

And he made ten lavers in addition to Moses'.
and he placed five on the right of Moses' laver.
and five on the left to wash with them This is the sanctification of the hands and feet.

the performance of the burnt offering they would rinse with them With the water of the laver they would rinse the innards of the burnt offering, and only the burnt offering, but not the peace offering, because it was eaten by the owners and throughout the city. The lavers were for sanctification and the sea for immersion.

Verse 7

And he made the ten golden candelabra according to their regulations Why is it stated in connection with the candelabra, "according to their regulations"? Because he informs us why he made ten candelabra, and everything he deduced from the Torah: the flowers, the knobs, the almond-shaped cups enumerated in the chapter were seventy, meaning that for each of the ten candelabra were seven lamps. (This is how my mother's brother, my uncle, Rabbi Klonimos the son of Rabbi Judah explained it, and it is a midrash), and its seven lamps corresponded to the seven planets: Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars.
and placed them in the Heichal, five from the right of Moses' candelabrum.
and five from the left but they were all in the south.

Verse 8

from the left of the table in the north.
and he made a hundred golden basins with which to sprinkle the blood on the altar.

Verse 9

And he made the priests' court This is known as theעֶזְרַת הַכֹּהֲנִים.
and the large court This is the court of the Israelites.

Verse 10

from the right side eastward, opposite the south He distanced it from the east, from opposite the entrance to the south of the forecourt, because it is neither respectful nor fitting that they should immerse themselves opposite the entrance of the vestibule.

Verse 11

And Huram made the pots Copper pots, made to gather the ashes to put them into the pots.

Verse 12

and the two bowls and chapiters atop the pillars for the two pillars.
and the networks were two These are the chains mentioned above (3:16), and the proof that it is so is that neither here nor in Kings does he mention the chains anywhere.
to cover the two bowls of the chapiters to cover the hollow of the chapiters with chains, and those branches were like palm branches, as I explained (ad loc.).

Verse 13

And the four hundred pomegranates Above (ad loc.), he states: "and he made a hundred pomegranates." How so? We must explain it in this manner: He surely made four hundred pomegranates, as is stated here, and where it is stated [that he made] a hundred, it means a hundred for each row, for

there were four rows, as it is stated: “two rows of pomegranates to one network,” and so two rows of pomegranates to the other network, totaling four rows, and the pomegranates were strung within the networks, which were set and inserted to cover the two bowls of the chapiters.

Verse 14

And he made the bases But in I Kings (7:27), it is written: “And he made the ten bases of copper.” The bases are the bases of the laver, and there their work is explained.

Verse 15

Verse 16

And the pots, and the shovels, and the forks Although we already mentioned it above, he repeats it again, to let us know that they were copper, and also to let us know about the forks, which were not mentioned above.
burnished - Heb. מָרוּק, similar to (Jer. 46:4): “polish (מִרְקוּ) the spears,”; (Lev. 6: 21): “it shall be scoured (וּמֹרַק) and rinsed with water.” In I Kings (7:45), it is written מָמְרָט, like (Lev. 13:40): “whose head will become bald (יִמָּרֵט),” and the Targum renders: fine copper.

Verse 17

in the thickness of the ground The Targum renders: clay, ardille in Old French.
between Succoth and Zeredathah In I Kings (7: 46) it says Zarethan. Zeredathah was the place of Jeroboam, (11: 26): “And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, whose mother’s name was Zeruah, a widow.” Since a corpse conveys ritual contamination in a tent, and a mezora likewise, and so it is with an idol, as we learned at the end of the third chapter of Abodah Zarah (Mishnah 8). “A widow” means that he widowed [isolated] Israel from its God. “From Zeredah” means that he narrowed the Torah and did not broaden it; i.e., מִן הַצְּרֻדָתָה, means הֵצַר דַּת אֱלֹהֵינוּ he narrowed the law of our God. My uncle of blessed memory explained it to me in this manner.

Verse 18

Verse 19

Verse 20

And the candelabra and their lamps To remove [the false idea] from the hearts of those who explain that the lamps were made from the body of the candelabrum and attached to it, because it is written: “and the candelabra and their lamps.” Since Scripture mentions the lamps separately and not the remaining work of the candelabrum separately, namely the cups and the flowers, we deduce that the lamps were not attached, and since they were not attached to it, they appeared like a different work, and it was necessary to mention the lamps, but the other works, which were attached to it, he does not mention because they are

called by the name of the candelabrum, and [the reason] he made ten candelabra, ten tables, ten lavers, the cherubim, and all that he made is explained in the Baraitha of Rabbi Phinehas the son of Jair (Midrash Tadshe, ch. 2).

Verse 21

And the flower Our Rabbis explained that this corresponds to the flower that Moses added in the section, "Behaalothecha": (Num. 8:4) "to its rootstock, to its flower, etc.," which is not mentioned in "Terumah."
and the tongs were gold with which they would lift up the wick from the lamp containing oil.
it was fine gold Refined and purified gold, fin in Old French, refined, pure, and in Menahoth (29a) it is explained: out of all the gold that Solomon had, out of the abundance of gold that entered the candelabrum to refine it and purify it and to fulfill the commandment of making a candelabrum of pure gold.

Verse 22

And the musical instruments - Heb. וְהַמְזַמְּרוֹת.
and the basins with which to sprinkle the blood on the altar.
and the spoons for th e spoons of frankincense (Lev. 24:7).
and the censers with which to gather up the part of the ashes that is separated [from the rest and cast beside the altar, as in Lev. 6:31, (and the rest of the ashes) to pick up from the altar, (ibid. 16:12): "And he shall take a full censer, etc."

Chapter 5

Verse 1

and Solomon brought his father David's hallowed things Whatever is mentioned in this verse—according to its simple meaning—refers to that which remained to him from the things that David hallowed, as is written above (I Chron. 18:11): "Those also King David dedicated to the Lord, [along] with the silver and the gold that he took from all the nations, etc.," and that which he left over he deposited into the treasuries of the House of God. And [in] Midrash Aggadah (Pesikta Rabbathi 6:7), some sages say that [he did not use these articles for the building of the Temple] because he knew that it was destined to be destroyed, in order that the nations should not say, "Our deity is strong," for it took revenge on this House, which was built from the loot and the spoils that David robbed from their heathen temples. Some say: So said Solomon, "There was a famine during the days of David my father for three consecutive years, year after year, and he should have given away these hallowed things to sustain the poor of Israel with them." I wish to bring support [to the view that Solomon did not build the Temple with the spoils of the nations], for regarding all the devoted things that David dedicated, as is written above (ibid.), it is not stated that with this Solomon made such and such a thing, as it is stated regarding the copper, as it is said (ibid. verse 8): "And from Tibhath and from Cun, cities of Hadadezer, David took huge quantities of copper, with which Solomon made the copper sea, etc.," but of the silver and gold, about which it is not stated that Solomon made anything from it, it may be deduced that he did not make [anything from it]. Therefore, it is not written here any copper, but silver and gold. According to the simple interpretation, it seems to me that Scripture does not mention copper because copper is

cheap, and it is not proper or fitting to bring it into the treasuries of the House of God.

Verse 2

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel He conducted [the matter] with the attribute of wisdom, in that he gathered the elders, and not the youths, [which was] better than David [had done,] who gathered even the youths, as it is written, “And David assembled all the leaders of Israel...Jerusalem” (I Chron. 28:1).

Verse 3

on the festival the festival of Succoth.

Verse 4

Verse 5

and the Tent of Meeting that Moses made, Solomon hid it in the treasuries of the House of God with the remaining vessels and the hallowed articles, because he did not need them, and our Sages (Tosefta of Sotah 13:1) said that they were hidden away.
all the sacred vessels that were in the Tent that David had given to the Ark.
the priests and the Levites brought them up. This refers back to the above, where Scripture says: “and the Levites bore the Ark,” and he explains: Who were those Levites that I mentioned to you above? The Levitic priests, for the priests are also of the sons of Levi, but they were not real Levites, and so it is written (I Kings 8:3): “and the priests took up the Ark.” And the Levites also brought up the vessels and the Tent of Meeting according to their regulations.

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

And the cherubim were spreading their wings over the place of the Ark in the place where the Ark was standing Therefore -
and the cherubim covered over the Ark and over its staves from above above the Ark. So were the staves standing, and they extended so far out toward the east, that the Ark could stand exactly beneath the cherubim without the hindrance of the staves. Therefore, “and the cherubim covered over the Ark.” And they also covered part of the staves adjacent to the Ark, but not all of them, because they reached until the east. But you cannot explain that the cherubim covered the entire staves. And also, because of this— And they extended the staves so that the ends of the staves were seen from the Ark before the Debir For if it were not so, but [if they were] the same; i.e., if they were extended with one measure one from the other, [i.e., the part of the staves extending eastward equaled the part extending westward]. The staves that Moses made were still there, and they stood in the Holy of Holies of the Tent of Meeting, which

was only ten [cubits], whereas this was twenty [cubits], and it reached from wall to wall. With the cherubim of Moses, about which it is also written, "spreading and covering," they did not have to move any part of the staves from their place, because the cherubim of Moses were standing over the Ark on the Ark cover, but as for the cherubim mentioned here- Solomon made them standing on their feet on the ground, but nevertheless, those of Moses were still attached to the Ark cover. This is how Rabbi Nathan explained it, (but our Rabbi explained) that the priests wished to bring the Ark into the Debir with its staves, but they were unable to do so, because the Cloud filled the House of the Lord, and they could not bring the cherubim up to the western wall. Therefore, they [the staves] protruded into the dividing curtain. To me, this poses a difficulty, however, because it is written (I Kings 8:10f.): "And it came to pass when the priests came out, etc.," and afterwards, "the glory of the Lord filled the House of God (sic)." (Rabbi Joseph of blessed memory, however, explained) that it does not say וַיִּתָּאָרְכוּ [in the reflexive conjugation], which would mean that they became elongated by themselves, but וַיַּאֲרִיכוּ [in the causative conjugation], which means that others elongated them, and he explained that the craftsmen elongated them to twenty cubits, and their two ends touched the eastern wall and their [other] two ends touched the western wall. It is, however, puzzling how they could spread out their wings and cover the Ark, which was ten cubits from them.

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

And it came to pass when the priests left the Holy He should have immediately written, "and the House became full of the cloud of the House of the Lord," but he interrupted in between, and so in I Kings (8:10): "And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the Holy, and the cloud filled the House of the Lord."
for all the priests that were present had sanctified themselves for this thing.
not taking heed of the divisions The twenty-four of the Levites and the twenty-four of the priests, but all those present sanctified themselves.

Verse 12

Verse 13

And the trumpeters, etc. were as one The meaning is: And they were united - all the trumpeters together. Now for what purpose were they united? To make one sound together to praise and to thank the Lord.

Chapter 6

Verse 1

Then Solomon said Since the House is full of smoke, I now know that the Shechinah is resting in the thick darkness therein, for so is His wont, as it is written (Exod. 20:18): "and Moses drew near to the thick darkness wherein God appeared." [Therefore, I deduce that] He surely wishes to stay therein, and in Sifre it is explained: Then Solomon said - when he saw the cloud, he said, "Now I see that the Shechinah rests in the House that I have built, for He promised to come and dwell therein out of the midst of the cloud and the thick darkness." Now where did He say this? (Lev. 16:2): "for in the cloud I shall appear on the Ark cover."

Verse 2

a House to dwell in - Heb. בֵּית זְבֻל a dwelling.
for You to dwell in forever For since it was selected, the Shechinah did not rest elsewhere, and the high places were prohibited.

Verse 3

and blessed all the congregation of Israel the blessing stated at the end of the episode.

Verse 4

Who spoke with His mouth that He would give him a son who would build Him a House.
has fulfilled He fulfilled His good word.

Verse 5

Since the day that I brought forth For this too You spoke to my father.

Verse 6

And I chose Jerusalem This refers to "I chose no city."
and I chose David This refers back to "neither did I choose a man."

Verse 7

Verse 8

you did well that it was in your heart i.e., I too choose the House that you thought to build, where My name shall dwell, as is stated above.

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

and he spread forth his hands Scripture should have said the following: “and he spread forth his hands toward heaven, and he said, etc.,” but it interrupted in between to inform [us] on what he stood, and so in I Kings (8:22f.): “and he spread forth his hands towards heaven, and he said.”

Verse 13

For Solomon had made This refers back to “opposite all the congregation of Israel,” i.e., how was he higher than all of them to make his words heard?
and he stood on it And now, all Israel could see him, and since he interrupted the topic, he had to repeat, “opposite all the congregation of Israel,” and so, “and he spread forth his hands toward heaven.”

Verse 14

there is no God like You insofar as You keep the covenant and the kindness that You decree from heaven to give to those who love You. You hide and conceal the covenant and the kindness to fulfill Your promise on earth.
who walk before You as my father David walked, and this is [the meaning of] For You have kept for Your servant David with an expression referring to the realization of a promise.

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17

Verse 18

But will God indeed dwell with man on the earth? This is an expression of wonder. Is it possible for man to believe that God will dwell on the earth? For the heaven and the heaven of the heaven, etc. However, because of the kindness that You bestowed upon my father, David, You contracted Your Shechinah.
much less this House that I have built So why did I build it? To pray before God and so that He should turn to our prayers.

Verse 19

to the cry - Heb. הָרִנָּה. This is a cry, like (I Kings 22:36): “A cry (הָרִנָּה) passed through the camp.” Perforce, concerning the cry of any man who flees in distress, he will not pray but express his cry in secret. This is the sequence of the verses, and the conclusion of the topic proves it, for he says, “You shall hear from Your abode.” You have thus learned that he built it only with this intention to bring down the Shechinah therein, in order that He dwell on the earth, to hear “from Your abode” the prayer that they will pray therein.

Verse 20

That Your eyes may be open, etc. whenever they pray to You.

Verse 21

Verse 22

If a man sins This verse refers to all Israel; whoever exacts an oath from his neighbor - if he is adjuring him legitimately, and the one swearing is swearing falsely, You shall hear from heaven. If, on the other hand, justice is on the side of the one who swears, for the litigant exacts an oath from him for naught, even the one who exacts the oath is called wicked.

Verse 23

and to justify the righteous not to punish him for the oath, for he swore in truth. Tosefta of Sotah (1: 3) explains [this verse as referring to the rite of the sotah, the married woman accused of adultery Num. 5:11-30)]: If a man sins by being intimate with a married woman. and an oath be exacted of him and an oath makes him guilty, for just as the water tests her, so does the water test him. before Your altar - as it is written (Num. 5:18): "And the priest shall have the woman stand [before the Lord]."
to bring his way upon his head - as it is written (ibid. verse 27): "her belly will swell and her thigh will fall away."
and to justify the righteous - (ibid. verse 28): "and she will be blessed with offspring."

Verse 24

And if Your people...is struck down not because You have no power, but because they will sin against You.
and confess - Heb. וְהוֹדוּ. The meaning is: and they will confess their iniquity, and the latter verse proves this (verse 26): "and confess to Your name and repent of their sin, so that You may answer them."

Verse 25

and bring them back to the land For when they fall and are struck down before their enemies, they [their enemies] will seize what they can and will bring them into captivity to another land.

Verse 26

When heaven is shut up as it is written (Deut. 11:17): "and He will shut up the heaven, and there will be no rain."

Verse 27

for You will teach them the good way as You did when there was a famine in David's time for three years (II Sam. 21:1), and You taught them and said to them, "(It is) for Saul and (also) for his bloody house." Likewise, so shall You teach them which sin causes them [their distress], for what reason the heaven was shut up.

Verse 28

whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness (there be) The meaning is: I have mentioned to You pestilence, blast and mildew, being struck down [in

battle], and lack of rainfall, and what else can I include, but whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there may be, and he pray and spread forth his hands toward this House, and this is what it says.

Verse 29

Any prayer, any supplication that he will pray and supplicate about, concerning any of these matters.
every man shall know his plague i.e., if he pray about his affliction or about his sickness to remove it from him.

Verse 30

and forgive and give to each man according to his ways, etc. to the wicked according to his wickedness and to the righteous according to his righteousness. For if He does not repay the wicked according to his wickedness, he will speak insolently toward Heaven, and he will say, “There is no God.” Then [the thoughts of] his heart will be known, and there will be a profanation of the Name [of God]. Likewise shall You do to the righteous according to his righteousness, which You shall do for him when he prays to You.

Verse 31

That they may fear You and the wicked will repent of his way; therefore, I pray to give each man according to his ways.

Verse 32

Verse 33

and You shall do whatever the stranger calls upon You Concerning an Israelite, I pray to give him according to his ways, but concerning a heathen, according to all the stranger calls upon You, because Israelites recognize the Holy One, blessed be He, and they know that He has the ability to do, and if his prayer is not heard, he assigns the cause to himself, to his sins, and he searches his deeds, but the heathen will complain of injustice and say, “I heard His fame throughout the world, and I toiled on many roads until I came and prayed in this place, and I did not find reality in Him any more than the other deities.” Therefore, You shall do whatever the stranger calls upon You.

Verse 34

toward the city With their faces toward Jerusalem.

Verse 35

and maintain their cause their revenge from their enemies. Another meaning is: their necessities. A similar instance is (I Kings 8:59): “that He sustain the cause of His servant.”

Verse 36

Verse 37

Verse 38

that I built for Your name The meaning is: this House, which I built in order to aggrandize Your name, for when You accept their prayer, they will pray to You in this House; wherever they are, they will turn to this, Your House.

Verse 39

You shall hear, etc. And through this, Your name will be aggrandized in the world.

Verse 40

Verse 41

And now, arise, O Lord so as not to have to move as until now, from Shiloh to Nob and from Nob to Gibeon.
You and the Ark of Your might that it will no longer move from now on.
Your might Because of the following it is called "Your might": because it performed wonders and mighty deeds among the Philistines. And so it is written above (I Chron 16:8-36): "Give thanks to the Lord," "Search for the Lord and His might." Our Sages stated further in Tractate Abodah Zarah 24b (I Sam. 6:12): "And the cows sang." What song did they recite? They said, (Ps. 98:1) "His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory."
shall be attired with salvation because they will not wander from place to place, like (Isa. 11:5): "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins."
and Your pious ones shall rejoice with the goodness with the abundance of goodness and tithes that will be given to the Levites as reward for guarding the Ark and singing before it.

Verse 42

do not turn back the face of Your anointed one by not treating me with goodness, and if not for my sake, do it for Your sake.

Chapter 7

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

And the priests...on their watches as David had divided them into twenty-four watches, for each watch to serve its week, and the Levites likewise on their twenty-four watches
to give thanks with musical instruments, for they recited (Ps. 136): "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His loving kindness is eternal."
with David's praise The musical instruments with which they recited David's praise and the thanksgivings were in the Levites' hands.
and the priests were sounding the trumpets opposite them For it was incumbent upon them to play music with the trumpets, as it is said (Num. 10: 8): "And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow [with the trumpets]."

Verse 7

And Solomon consecrated the interior of the court Our Sages differ in this matter (Zeb. 59): Rabbi Judah says: He consecrated the floor of the forecourt with the sanctity of the altar to burn offerings on the floor, because the copper altar was too small to contain [the offerings], because they brought many sacrifices. Rabbi Jose said to him: Was it not already stated (1:6): "And he offered up on it a thousand burnt offerings" on the altar that Moses had made? When you compute the number of cubits and the number of burnt offerings, you will find that this one of stones was larger than that of Moses, for on Moses' altar, the place of its pyre was a cubit by a cubit, whereas on Solomon's, the place of its pyre was twenty-four by twenty-four. The result is that Solomon's [altar] was 576 times as large as that of Moses. If so, what is the meaning of (I Kings 8:64): "the king consecrated the interior of the court"? That he set the stone altar into it, fastened to the floor.
could not contain He is talking about Moses' [altar], like a person who says, "So and so is a dwarf and is disqualified from performing the sacrificial service."

Verse 8

from the entrance of Hamath which is in the north of the land of Israel.
to the brook of Egypt which is opposite it, as is delineated in אֵלֶּה מַטְעֵי (ibid. verse 5).

Verse 9

Verse 10

And on the twenty-third day of the seventh month, he dismissed the people which was the ninth [day] of the inauguration of the Temple, but in I Kings (8:66) it is written: "On the eighth day," which was the twenty-second of the month. The meaning is: On the eighth day he gave them permission to leave after the Feast, and on the morrow, when the Feast was over, they all went [home] together. Another meaning: On the eighth day he gave them permission and dismissed those who lived within the

Sabbath limits and whoever wished to travel and go on that day in that limit, and on the following day, he dismissed the entire populace. In Genesis Rabbah (35:3) it is explained that they took his leave but waited there one more day and then they repeated [this procedure] and took leave again a second time; therefore it is said: “on the twenty-third day of the month.”
rejoicing and delighted of heart, etc. for David, for Solomon For that which He spoke with His mouth above (I Chron 28:6): “Your son Solomon - he shall build My House,” He fulfilled with His hand, for He gave him a son sitting on his throne, who built a House in the name of the Lord. And in Genesis Rabbah it is explained: Said Rabbi Levi: It is written: “for the inauguration of, etc.” “Rejoicing” refers to “that the Lord had wrought for David,” viz. that He fulfilled that which He had vowed to Solomon, that He chose him from all his brothers because he was wise.
and for Israel His people it is written in I Kings (8:56): “there has not failed one word, etc.” Another explanation: “and for Israel His people” - they had a ruler, so that they dwelt safely and tranquilly, as it is written (ibid. 5:5): “And Judah and Israel dwelt, etc.”

Verse 11

Verse 12

And the Lord appeared to Solomon at night in a vision of the night.
I have heard your prayer With the wording that Solomon used, “And You shall hear.” The Holy One, blessed be He, answered him: “I have heard your prayer.” He prayed, (above 6:26): “When heaven is closed up.” And the Holy One, blessed be He, answered him, “If I close up.” He prayed concerning famine and locusts, and the Holy One, blessed be He, answered him, “if I command locusts.” He prayed concerning pestilence, and the Holy One, blessed be He, answered him, “or if I send pestilence upon My people.
and My people... humble themselves” by praying and seeking My presence and repenting of their evil ways. Hence we have three [responses] corresponding to three [entreaties].

Verse 13

If I shut up... if I command...or if I send corresponding to three prayers, “I shall hear...and forgive their sin, and heal their land.”

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

and My eyes and heart will be Jonathan renders (I Kings 9:3): “and My presence will rest there if My will is performed there at all times.” My eyes will be there if My heart and My will are there.

Verse 17

Verse 18

Verse 19

Verse 20

I shall cast from before Me according to the condition between Me and you, viz. (Lev. 26: 14): “But if you do not heed Me.” What does it say there? (verse 31): “And I shall make your sanctuaries desolate.”
and I shall make it a proverb as people compose a proverb about someone who was befallen by misfortune.
and a byword - Heb. וְשִׁנְיָנָה, like (Deut. 6:7): וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ, “and you shall teach them.” [It is] an expression of recounting misfortunes. Similarly, the Targum of (Gen. 37:10) וַיְסַפֵּר “And he told,” is וְאִשְׁתָּעִי, and [the Targum of] וְשִׁנְיָנָה is וּשְׁוִעִי.

Verse 21

every passerby will be astounded i.e., The Temple will be destroyed, and every passerby will then be astounded (יִשֹּׁם), like (Job 18:20): “Concerning his day - the later people shall be astonished (נָשַׁמּוּ).”
Why has the Lord done בָּזֶה, like (Deut. 29:23): “Why (עַל מֶה) has the Lord done thus,” and so it is written in I Kings (9:9).

Chapter 8

Verse 1

Now it came to pass at the end of twenty years The meaning is: at the end of twenty years that the entire construction had been completed: that of the House of the Lord seven years and that of his palace thirteen years, as it is written in I Kings (6:38, 7:1).

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

And he built Tadmor in the desert In I Kings (9:18) it [the name] is written “Tamar,” but read, “Tadmor.” This accounts for that which we learned in Tractate Jebamoth (16a): We may not accept proselytes from the Tarmodites; and in Genesis Rabbah (56:11), in the portion dealing with the binding [of Isaac] it is explained that they aided Israel’s enemies, and because they changed themselves and became worse, the word תָּמָר is used in Kings, an expression of exchange (תְּמוּרָה), for they should have repaid Israel for the kindness that Solomon bestowed upon them, for he built the city of Tadmor for them. Because of Solomon, it is not written here “Tamar,” but “Tadmor,” i.e., an important city, in deference to

Solomon’s honor, for it is no honor to Solomon to say here that he built a city which rebelled against him and sinned against him. Therefore, it is written, “Tadmor,” and not “Tamar.”

Verse 5

fortified cities Because they stood on the border, they needed to be fortified.

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

for his work [i.e.] for the work of his building. Why? All the proselytes were [employed] to do his work, but not the men of Israel, because the Israelites served as soldiers and men of war and the officers of his chariots and his horsemen.

Verse 10

two hundred fifty And in I Kings (9:23): “five hundred fifty,” but [in fact], these two are identical, for there Scripture deducts three hundred and then repeats and counts them again, for there it is written (5:30): “Besides Solomon’s chief officers, etc....three thousand and three hundred, who bore rule,” and here it is written above (2:1): “three thousand six hundred.” We find that what is missing in one verse is added in the other verse. Scripture separates them because the three hundred extra were proselytes, and they were appointed over those three thousand three hundred who ruled over the seventy thousand who bore burdens and the eighty thousand hewers in the mountains (I Kings 5:29), and these two hundred fifty were Israelites, appointed over those three hundred proselytes.

Verse 11

Solomon brought up from the City of David That is Zion, for he let her dwell in the City of David when he married her, and she was there until he completed building his palace.
because they are holy The entire city and all the houses.
since the Ark of the Lord came to them because the Ark of the Lord had come to them. [The word] בָּאָה is a feminine expression, similar to (I Sam. 4:17): “and the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord (sic) was taken (נִלְקְחָה).”

Verse 12

on the altar of the Lord This was the copper altar that Solomon built. Some explain that this was the copper altar that Solomon made instead of the copper altar that Moses built, but this is astounding, because it is written (II Kings 16:15): “and the burnt offerings of the entire people of the land, etc. and the blood of every burnt offering, etc. shall be

for me to visit," i.e., the copper altar, which was there heretofore, shall be for me to visit. This proves that Moses' copper altar was still there.

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

until this day [from] the founding of the House of the Lord From the day of its founding until its completion.

Chapter 9

Verse 1

to test Solomon whether that which she had heard about his wisdom was true, and she came to test him.
with riddles - Heb. בְּחִידוֹת like (Jud. 14:12): "Let me ask you a riddle (אָחוּדָה נָא לָכֶם חִידָה)," [in the story] of Samson.

Verse 2

and nothing was hidden Since she saw that he told her everything, and nothing that she asked him was hidden, she admitted that the report she had heard was true. In the Targum (Sheni) of Megillath Esther (1:2), some of the riddles that she asked him are written.

Verse 3

Verse 4

And the food of his table fowl (I Kings 5:3) and kinds of delicacies that were served on his table in abundance.
and the seating of his servants That each one recognized his place when they were seated at the table, and of those who constantly saw the king's face, no one was allowed to sit in his neighbor's place all the days of his life.
and the station of his attendants Each one would retain his station and his position, and he would not change it the next day.
and their attire The attire that they would wear tomorrow was not the same as, the attire that they wore today.
and his cupbearers most of his cupbearers.
and his ascent the stairway by which he ascended from his palace to the Temple.
and she was breathless because she thought that there was no wisdom in any of the kingdoms but in her own country and like that of her wise men,

because her country was in the east; they were wise because they were stargazers, as is stated in the first chapter of Tractate Rosh Hashanah, for Eretz Israel is west of Babylon, and that is what is written (I Kings 5:10): "And Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the children of the east," for they were in the east, as it is written (Gen. 11: 2): "And it came to pass as they migrated from the east." (I Kings 5:10) "And all the wisdom of Egypt," for they were sorcerers, necromancers, and astrologers, and he was wise in divination (עַיִּיר). So it is written in Pesikta (d'Rav Kahana p. 33b). The word (עַיִּיר) is Arabic, and in Leviticus Rabbah (32:2), in the chapter dealing with the son of the Egyptian (24:10): (Eccl. 10:20): "for a bird of the air shall carry the voice." This is the raven and refers to the art of bird divination (טוּיאַרי).

Verse 5

Verse 6

half of your abundant [wisdom] The many wisdoms.

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

algom wood In Pesikta it is explained: One verse (I Kings 10:11) says אַלְמֻגִּים, and one verse says אַלְגּוּמִּים. The truth is that its name is אַלְגּוּמִּים, but it is called אַלְמֻגִּים because it melted and bent because of its softness, (like cups, which bend because of their value.)

Verse 11

a path מְסִלּוֹת, stairs. In I Kings (10:12) it is written מִסְעָד, [a support] after the manner that they make for those who ascend by way of elevated places and stairs. Some say that מִסְעָד and מְסִילָה are one and the same. and harps and psalteries for the singers Some say (Jonathan and Rashi to Kings) for the Levites who sing with musical instruments, and Rabbi Eliezer explained it to mean: for the singers who stroll before the king. A similar case is (I Kings 5:12): "and his songs were a thousand and five." These were secular songs that he composed to sing before him, and that is what is meant (below 35:25): "And Jeremiah lamented over Josiah, and all the male singers and the female singers recited in their lamentations, etc."

Verse 12

aside from that which she brought This is written here in deference to the honor of the kings of Judah; it means that she gave him more than he gave her, and in I Kings (10:13) it is written: "aside from that which he

gave her according to King [Solomon's] ability." [He gave her] things that were common in the land of Israel, but were not common in her country.

Verse 13

Verse 14

Aside from that which the guides - Heb. חַתָּרִים. They were afraid to pass from province to province or from kingdom to kingdom without a guide, and they would give him the guide's fee.
and the merchants would bring They would bring him [gold] on a pretext in order to see his wisdom.

Verse 15

two hundred shields צִנָּה which encompasses the person from his three sides, as is written (Ps. 5: 13): "As a shield You encompass him with favor" (כַּצִּנָּה).
malleable gold gold that is soft and easily flattened out. It had great value because it could be spun like a thread.
six hundred gold pieces Six hundred zehubim, the equivalent of six manehs, for the zahab is the dinar.

Verse 16

the forest of Lebanon Solomon built a huge house in Jerusalem, as is proven further, and Shishak took all those shields (below 12:9), and he made them (sic) from an abundance of the large trees of Lebanon, as it is written in I Kings (7:2): "And he built the house of the forest of Lebanon, etc. on four rows, etc.," and there he deposited those shields, and that is what is written (Isa. 22:8): "and you looked on that day to the weapons of the house of the forest."

Verse 17

ivory throne the ivory of elephants.

Verse 18

And there were six steps to the throne steps by which to ascend.
with armrests on either side by the place of the seat like rods from corner to corner, from the right and from the left, upon which to support his arms.

Verse 19

and two lions were standing beside the armrests [The lions were made] of gold, and the entire form of the throne and the forms of the beasts that were in the throne are depicted in the Targum of the Scroll of Esther (1:2).

Verse 20

Verse 21

ivory the tusks of elephants and the elephants themselves.
and apes In German, meerkats, long- tailed monkeys.
and peacocks - Heb. וְתוּכִיִּים.

Verse 22

Now King Solomon transcended, etc. To fulfill that which He said to him, (I Kings 3:13): “And I have also given you that which you have not asked, etc. and honor.”

Verse 23

And all the kings of the earth, etc. To fulfill that which He said to him, (ibid. verse 12): “Behold I have given you a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like you before you.”

Verse 24

And each one would bring his gift as a pretext because they were [really] coming to hear [his wisdom], since it is disrespectful to come before a king empty-handed, similar to (Deut. 16:16): “and he shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.”
weapons - Heb. נְשֶׁק.

Verse 25

and he placed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.
some of them. He transgressed [the negative commandment of] (Deut. 17:17): “Only he shall not multiply horses to himself.”

Verse 26

Verse 27

Verse 28

Verse 29

in the words of Nathan the prophet (II Sam. 12:25): “And He sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah for the Lord’s sake.”
and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite (I Kings 11:31) who rent the kingdom from him and gave it to Jeroboam.

Verse 30

over all Israel forty years unlike David, who reigned seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem.

Chapter 10

Verse 1

for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king In Shechem, which was Jeroboam's place, which was in the territory of Ephraim. And Jeroboam was an Ephrathite, and all this was brought about by the Holy One, blessed be He, to fulfill His word, (I Kings 11:11): "I will surely tear the kingdom."

Verse 2

And it was when... heard The meaning is: And it was when he heard - prior to this, when they came to make him [Rehoboam] king in Shechem, when he [Jeroboam] was still in Egypt.

Verse 3

And they sent and called him, and...came All this was to let us know the will of the Holy One, blessed be He, that even Jeroboam himself came to make Rehoboam king, but the Holy One, blessed be He, reversed his words [i.e., Jeroboam's intention,] until Jeroboam reigned.

Verse 4

Your father made our yoke hard because he was a man who toiled at work, and he made it incumbent upon us to sustain his laborers with the tax, as it is written in I Kings (5:27): "And King Solomon raised a levy, etc."

Verse 5

Verse 6

How do you advise - Heb. נוֹעָצִים, [in the passive voice], like יוֹעֲצִים [in the active voice], and so he says from יוֹעֲצִים. נוֹדָעִים, יוֹדְעִים means the future, and נוֹעָצִים means that which they already counseled.

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

My little finger is thicker than my father's loins My little finger is larger than my father's loins; i.e., I am stronger than he.

Verse 11

burdened - Heb. הֶעֱמִיס, loaded, like (Gen. 44:13): "and each man loaded (וַיַּעֲמֹס) his donkey."
with scorpions Brimmen in German, which sting like scorpions.

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

because it was brought about, etc. so that the Lord God might establish His word as is delineated in I Kings (11:31–37), to remove from him the ten tribes and to give them to Jeroboam, and this is the meaning of (Gen. 49:10): “The scepter will not depart from Judah” [meaning that] he will not be banished from his kingdom, “until he comes to Shiloh,” meaning until Judah comes to Shiloh to crown Rehoboam there, and there “peoples will gather to him” to crown him, and there the kingdom was divided, and the reign over the ten tribes was lost. Now Shechem is a small city adjacent to Shiloh, as it is written at the end of Judges (21:19): “Behold, there is a sacrifice before the Lord in Shiloh from time to time, etc. on the east side of the highway that goes up from Beth-El to Shechem,” and it is written in Jeremiah (41:5): “from Shechem (and) from Shiloh,” and in honor of the Tabernacle of Shiloh, they would gather in Shechem, which was fit for the people to assemble in, and it adjoined Shiloh. And when they would assemble in Shechem, the scepter would depart from Judah, for there the kingdom was divided.

Verse 16

Each man to your homes, O Israel This refers back to, “What share do we have in David?” Why should we leave our homes and follow him? Not so, but all Israel, return each man to his home.
Now see your house, David This refers back to, “And no heritage in Jesse’s son,” i.e., we have no heritage in him, but in the Temple in Jerusalem, where we sacrifice and appear on the three Pilgrimage Festivals.
see your house, David We do not need it to go there. Let it be yours alone. (But all this does not appeal to me) but, “See your house, David we have no desire either in you or in your Temple.”

Verse 17

Verse 18

Hadoram He is identical with Adoniram (I Kings 4:6), for during Solomon’s time, he enjoyed great eminence, but in Rehoboam’s time his greatness was humbled. Therefore, he was called Hadoram.
and the Children of Israel pelted him with stones and because Rehoboam did not know the cause of the rebellion in which they turned away from him, he was slain when he requested the levy that Solomon had levied upon them.

Verse 19

And the Israelites rebelled against the house of David - Heb. וַיִּפְשְׁעוּ, an expression of rebellion. Examples are (II Kings 1:1): "Moab rebelled (וַיִּפְשַׁע) against Israel"; (Prov. 18:19): "A rebellious (נִפְשָׁע) brother"; (below 27:19): "then Libnah rebelled (תִּפְשַׁע)."

Chapter 11

Verse 1

and he assembled the house of Judah and Benjamin who were together on the border. Jerusalem belonged to both of them, and the Temple was built on their common border. In the section dealing with boundaries in Joshua, it explains how their border was shared. Our Rabbis also said (Yoma 12a, Meg. 26a, Zeb. 53b): A strip protruded from the territory of Benjamin and entered the territory of Judah, upon which the altar was built. Therefore, they were inseparable, and they are also mentioned close to one another.

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

with your brothers Are they not your brothers, the sons of one man?

Verse 5

and he built cities for fortification - Heb. לְמָצוֹר. He built small cities and surrounded them with water for strength, and this is [called] מָצוֹר as it is written in Isaiah (37:25): "I dug and drank water, and I dried up with the soles of my feet all rivers of fortification (מָצוֹר)." And this was now necessary because Israel rebelled against him.

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

leaders chiefs and officers to guard the towns and the large cities.
and storehouses of food, oil, and wine in order to have food prepared for them should the house of Israel march upon them to besiege them.

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

For the Levites had abandoned their open land that was in the entire land of the ten tribes.
because Jeroboam...had coerced them to abandon He coerced them to abandon serving and ministering to the Lord.

Verse 15

priests for the high places i.e., Why did Jeroboam coerce them to abandon [their positions]? Because he stationed pagan priests for the satyrs.

Verse 16

And after them [i.e., after] the Levites and the priests.

Verse 17

Verse 18

Abihail the daughter of Eliab Like: and Abihail, similar to (Jer. 11:19): "And I was like a lamb and a bull (כְּכֶבֶשׂ אַלּוּף)." The following was the reason that Samuel the seer erred when Jesse passed Eliab before Samuel, and he [Samuel] said, (I Sam. 16:6): "Surely before the Lord is His anointed." This is the one about whom the Holy One, blessed be He, is destined to say, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." But Samuel erred about him, for he saw Eliab's daughter as Rehoboam's wife, the queen, and because of the following matter, Samuel was punished: When Saul asked him, (ibid. 9: 18) "Which is the house of the seer?" Samuel replied, "I am the seer," in which case he did not answer him with humility, saying, "What do you wish." [Therefore,] the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "By your life, you are destined to see, and you will not know what you see," for he erred concerning Eliab and his daughter the queen.

Verse 19

Verse 20

Verse 21

Verse 22

as a leader among his brothers in order to make him king.

Verse 23

and he dispersed He scattered his sons to all the lands of Judah. A similar expression is (I Chron. 4:38): “And their fathers’ houses spread (פָּרְצוּ) exceedingly.”

Chapter 12

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

They have humbled themselves; I shall not destroy them A similar instance is found below (14: 6): “The land is still before us for we have sought, etc. we have sought.” So is the custom of the Scriptures, that when it interrupts in the middle, it repeats the word. An example is (Num. 10:32): “And it will be, if you go with us, it will be that the good, etc.”

Verse 8

For they will be his slaves [i.e., slaves] of Shishak and the other nations, as is explained.
and they will know My service When they repent, no ruler of the kings of the nations will be over them, but when you abandon My Law, you will experience servitude to the kings of the lands, and you will serve them.

Verse 9

Verse 10

and he entrusted them in the hands of the chiefs of the runners He took them from the house of the forest of Lebanon and entrusted them to the chiefs of the runners and afterwards they returned them to the chamber of the runners The room of the runners, i.e., to their place. Another explanation I heard from my mentor is that because he was afraid of the king of Egypt and the king of Israel, they would carry them [the shields] before him.

Verse 11

Verse 12

And when he humbled himself, the Lord’s wrath returned from him He should have stated this above immediately when he said, “And Shishak... marched,” but he interrupted in between because he had to mention, “And...made instead of them shields of copper.”

Verse 13

And King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem And he explains why, because when he was first made king, he was forty-one years old; therefore, he had the strength and the power to strengthen himself. He was a year old when David died, for Solomon reigned forty years, and Solomon had not yet reigned when Rehoboam was born. We find that Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he reigned.
the city that the Lord had chosen wherein to place His name, out of all the tribes of Israel but they deteriorated in their deeds, as it is written: “And he did that which was evil, for he did not set his heart to seek the Lord,” and they caused the Shechinah to leave them, and it was as if they were complaining and demonstrating about that.

Verse 14

Verse 15

in the words of Shemaiah the prophet Every prophet would write his book, containing that which he prophesied, and this is the Shemaiah who was mentioned above (11:2, 12:5). And the verse written further (13:22), “And the rest of the deeds of Abijah and his ways and his words are written in the midrash of the prophet Iddo,” proves this, [that each prophet wrote a book of his prophecies, and] his [Iddo’s] book was called midrash.

Chapter 13

Verse 1

Verse 2

Three years he reigned in Jerusalem and no more, as is proven in I Kings (15:9): “And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam, king of Israel, Asa reigned over Judah.” We find that he did not reign even three whole years.
Micaiah the daughter of Uriel And above (11:20), he calls her by a different name, Maacah the daughter of Absalom, and in I Kings (15:10), it is likewise written “Maacah the daughter of Absalom.” Micaiah the daughter of Uriel was her [real] name, and here he calls her thus because this is the genealogical record of Judah. In Kings, which is the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, he calls her by her nickname, Maacah the daughter of Absalom. Now, for this reason, they nicknamed her Maacah, rather than call her by her real name, Micaiah, (and the name of her father was Uriel Abishalom). She was called by the name of her daughter-in-law, who was a valiant woman, a heroic woman, as it is written (below 15:16): “And also Maacah the mother of King Asa he removed from being queen,” and in honor of her daughter-in-law, they called the mother-in-law by the daughter-in-law’s name. So it is explained in Yerushalmi (unknown). Now this tradition is in the name of Rabbi Eliezer, and he told me this in the name of his father, and so I found in his father’s commentary: Wherever a “vav” is added to the name of a woman, this is to her praise, like Athaliah (below 22: 12): “and Athaliah reigned over the land,” for she was a valiant woman; similarly Jecaliah (ibid. 26:3) and Jecaliahu (II Kings 15:2), because she was a heroic woman, for Amaziah her husband fled to Lachish and was there fifteen years until he died, and she judged the people all those fifteen years, and later, when he died, they crowned his son Uzziah after him at the age of sixteen.

Verse 3

Verse 4

And Abijah arose For Abijah went to war against Jeroboam in Jeroboam’s territory on Mount Ephraim.

Verse 5

a covenant of salt with endurance and permanence. And now -

Verse 6

Jeroboam, etc. the servant of Solomon the son of David, arose, etc. and a great stigma is attached to this.

Verse 7

And there gathered to him worthless wicked.
and they overwhelmed Rehoboam the son of Solomon and Rehoboam was young and soft-hearted and since they found in him humility and soft-heartedness, they overwhelmed him.
young - Heb. נַעַר. Although he was forty-one years old when he reigned, he is called a youth (נַעַר), as I explained above (I Chron. 22:5) in regards to Solomon.

Verse 8

Verse 9

like the peoples of the lands Whoever wishes to come and be initiated to be a priest to a golden calf, shall bring a young bull and seven rams, and be accepted.
to initiate himself - Heb. לְמַלְּאֹ יָדוֹ. To differentiate between impure and pure, similar to (Exod. 29:29): "to be anointed and initiated (וּלְמַלְּאָה בָם אֶת יָדָם) through them."

Verse 10

engage in the work i.e., in their work; this one to sing, and that one to guard the gates, every man to his work, as David prepared it.

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17

Verse 18

Verse 19

Verse 20

And Jeroboam could muster no more strength, etc., and the Lord smote him i.e., Jeroboam.
and he died He did not die immediately, but continuously deteriorated because of the wars, and in Genesis Rabbah (65:20), it is explained that the Lord smote Abijah.

Chapter 14

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

And he commanded Judah to seek unlike the Ten Tribes, who sought other, new Gods, which came up of late, and did not seek the God of their fathers.

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

as long as the land is before us As long as the kingdom is established before us, so that if we need them, they will be a refuge for us. And all this happened in the ten years about which it is written (above 13:23): “in his time the land was tranquil.” But after those ten years, there was a war between him and Baasha all their lives, for in the third year of Asa, Baasha reigned, and seven years there was peace between them, and so it is proven here as well (verse 5): “and there was no war with him in these years.” But in the other years there was war with him, and below (15:19) it is written: “And there was no war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa’s reign.” We can, however, explain that the war that he had with the Cushites was not until the thirty-fifth year of his reign, but this is difficult to me, for it is written below (16:1): “In the thirty-sixth year of Asa’s reign, Baasha...advanced,” until (verse 9): “you have dealt foolishly concerning this, for from now on there will be wars with you.” It appears from here that prior to this, he did not have wars, and he lived after that only five years, and in I Kings 15:32, it is written: “And there was war between Asa and Baasha, etc. all their lives.” In Seder Olam (ch. 16) it is explained clearly.
for we sought the Lord our God; we sought [Him] Since we sought Him, He gave us peace from round about.
So they built cities.
and prospered And a similar instance is (above 12:7): “And when the Lord saw that they had humbled themselves, etc.”

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

it makes no difference to You to aid i.e., even though we are few and they are as numerous as the sand by the sea, and we have no strength before them, You can help both the great and the powerless; it is known that You have strength to aid; therefore, help us, O Lord our God, for we have relied on You.
let no man rule against You Let not our enemies - man - have human strength to rule (עִמָּךְ) with You, i.e., against You, to be victorious, so that they should not say, "We have defeated their God." Another explanation from the Rabbi: Let not the weak one (אֱנוֹשׁ) be held back (יַעְצַר), for we are weak, deprived of strength, keeping us back (עוֹצְרֵי יָד) from defeating them. And an example is (Deut. 11:17): "and He will hold back (וְעָצַר) the heaven"; (Gen. 20:18): "For the Lord had held back (וְעָצַר עָצַר)," and like (Jud. 13:16): "If you take me in (תַּעְצְרֵנִי)."

Chapter 15

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Now there were many days for Israel without a true God until you came. and without an instructing priest Since no one asks them words of Torah, the priests will not instruct you.

Verse 4

And they returned to the Lord, the God of Israel, when they were in distress He means to say that now, when they were beset with troubles, they beseeched the Lord, the God of Israel, and they sought Him; therefore, He was found by them, and He saved you (sic) wherever you went.

Verse 5

And in those times in those numerous days for Israel, [when they were] without a true God there was no peace for anyone going or coming, etc. Concerning Rehoboam it is written (above 12: 2): "Shishak, the king of Egypt, marched against Jerusalem, for they had betrayed the Lord." Abijah also experienced many turmoils.

Verse 6

And nation was crushed by nation - Heb. וְכֻתַּת. Another instance of this is (Num. 14:45): "and they struck them and crushed them (וַיַּכֻּתוּם)."

Verse 7

But you be strong to seek God.

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

And they sacrificed to the Lord on that day of the plunder they brought The meaning is: And the plunder that they brought, they sacrificed seven hundred cattle and seven thousand sheep which they had captured, and from that they brought, as above: (14:14): "And they also smote the tents of the livestock, and they captured many sheep. etc." Another possible explanation is: "And they sacrificed to the Lord on that day" - when they were victorious and came in peace to Jerusalem. "from the plunder they brought" - from the plunder that they had brought, i.e., seven hundred cattle and seven thousand sheep.

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

And also Maacah, King Asa's mother he deposed from [being] the queen because she had made a frightful image for an asherah to gratify her lust. [מִפְלֶצֶת means] מַפְלֵא לְעוּתָא. It carried lasciviousness to an extreme. She made herself a phallus for the image, and would copulate with it.

Verse 17

The high places, however, were not removed private high places, upon which they had become accustomed to sacrificing to Heaven from the time that Shiloh was destroyed until the Temple was built. [Those who worshipped there] were punishable by כָּרֵת, premature death.

Verse 18

Verse 19

And there was no war, etc. We learned in Seder Olam (ch. 16): “In the thirty-sixth year of Asa’s kingdom, Baasha, the king of Israel, advanced.” Is it possible to say so? Had not Baasha already died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa’s reign, as it is written (I Kings 16:8): “In the twenty-sixth year of Asa, king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha reigned”? What then is the meaning of “In the thirty-sixth year of Asa’s kingdom”? This corresponds to the thirty-six years from the time that Solomon married Pharaoh’s daughter, for so it is written (I Kings 2:39-46): “and two of Shimei’s slaves ran away... And the king commanded Benaiah etc. and he smote (Sic) and fell upon him,” and immediately following this Scripture writes about Solomon’s marriage to Pharaoh’s daughter, i.e., immediately after those three years, and in the fourth year he married her, and he reigned forty years. We find that she was with him thirty-six years, and corresponding to them were the thirty-six years that the decree was issued upon the kings of Aram to be adversaries to Israel and finally to fall into the hand[s] of David’s sons. Therefore, it is stated: “In the thirty-sixth year of Asa’s kingdom.” In the sixteenth year of his reign, after Zerah the Cushite fell into his hand[s], that is the thirty-sixth year from Solomon’s death, and in the sixteenth [year] of Asa, the king of Israel and the king of Aram made a treaty to advance and provoke Asa. Asa sinned, as it is stated (16:2f.): “And Asa brought out silver and gold... saying, ‘Make (sic) a treaty between me and you...’ And Ben Hadad heeded.” And the kings of Aram did not cease being adversaries to Israel until Ahaz died, and in the third year of Ahaz, the king of Israel and the king of Aram made a treaty to advance and provoke Ahaz, and Ahaz had no merit that they should fall into his hand[s]; so they both fell into the hand [s] of Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria.

Chapter 16

Verse 1

Verse 2

in Damascus And in I Kings (15:18) it is written, “Damesek,” and in another verse (II Kings 16: 10) it is written, “Dumesek.” It is all the same, an example being שֵׁרֶבִיט ,שֵׁבֶט ,שׁוֹט, whip, rod, scepter.

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

therefore...escaped You did not prevail against them. Why not? Because you did not trust in the Holy One, blessed be He. For had you trusted in the Holy One, blessed be He, when the king of Israel and the king of Aram made a treaty against you, as you trusted in Him when the Cushites attacked you, they would not have escaped from your hand, and you would have defeated them all, and you would not have lost your money, which you gave him in order that he abrogate his treaty with Baasha. Now that you did not trust in the Holy One, blessed be He, you lost your money, and the king of Aram escaped from your hand.

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

into the prison house - Heb. בֵּית הַמַּהְפֶּכֶת. A prison made of vaultwork, gewelb(e)t in Middle High German, vaulted (prison).

Verse 11

Verse 12

until his ailment spread upward The swelling in his feet spread from the sole of his foot to the top of his head.

Verse 13

Verse 14

and divers kinds These are kinds of spices, and the spices were prepared with the perfumer’s art, a mixture. The meaning is: prepared with the perfumer’s art.
and they kindled an exceedingly great fire They burned good spices for him into ashes, and they scattered those ashes on him. Others explain this like (Abodah Zarah 11a): “We may burn for the kings.” Now what did they burn? Their biers and the utensils they used.

Chapter 17

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

in the first ways of David, his father But not the last ways, when he sinned in the incident of Bathsheba, and when the Adversary enticed him to count Israel. This is the most accurate interpretation, but others explain "first" as meaning superior to Solomon and Rehoboam. Regarding Solomon, it is written (I Kings 11:4): "his wives turned away his heart" at the end of his days, and he built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon." Regarding Rehoboam, it is written (above 12:1): "And when he became strong, he abandoned the Law of the Lord." [Jehoshaphat was also not] like Abijam, about whom it is written (I Kings 15:2): "and his heart was not complete with the Lord, his God," or like Asa, who did not rely on the Lord; [Jehoshaphat] resembled his father, David, who had only one heart for his Father in heaven.
and did not inquire of the baalim like the practice of Israel in his time, for Ahab, who was in his time, worshipped the baalim, as did Israel in his time.

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

And his heart was uplifted in the ways of the Lord His heart was lifted up in this matter, that he went only in the ways of the Lord. An example of this is (Exod. 35:26): "whose hearts had uplifted them in wisdom."

Verse 7

Ben Hail That was his name. Others explain: he sent to his officers, every officer a valiant man. But I have difficulty with this interpretation because, if so, it should have only said, "Obadiah." The fact that it says, "to Obadiah" proves that Ben Hail was a person's name.
to teach in the cities of Judah [i.e., to teach] the Torah and to instruct the Children of Israel.

Verse 8

And with them of the Levites were Shemaiah, Nethaniah, etc.
and with them were Elishama and Jehoram, the priests because it is incumbent upon the priests and the Levites to teach and to instruct, as it is written (Deut. 24:8): "in accordance with everything the priests, the Levites teach you." The officers went with them because they [the people] would not disobey their orders, and [the officers went] to coerce them [the people] to heed them [the priests] and to observe [and] to do in accordance with the order of the judges. An example (ibid. 15:18): "Judges and law-enforcing officials shall you appoint for yourself": Judges to judge the people, and law-enforcing officials to coerce them to comply with the orders of the judges.

Verse 9

Verse 10

And the fear of the Lord was upon all the kingdoms of the lands in the merit of having studied Torah.

Verse 11

and loads of silver - Heb. וְכֶסֶף מַשָּׂא, loads of silver. An example (Isa. 46:1): "נְשֵׂאתֵיכֶם עֲמוּסוֹת מַשָּׂא: the things that you carried are made a load."

Verse 12

was becoming greater - Heb. וְגָדֵל. Scripture uses] a similar expression in reference to three people: Isaac, Samuel, and Jehoshaphat, but concerning Moses, David, and Mordecai, it says וְגָדוֹל. Concerning Isaac, Samuel, and Jehoshaphat, it says, וְגָדֵל because it is not proper to say וְגָדוֹל, great [in the context in which the word appears in the verse]. In regards to Samuel, it says, (I Sam. 2: 21): "And the lad Samuel grew up with the Lord." God forbid that it should say, גָּדוֹל עִם ה', he was great with the Lord. Here too, he [Jehoshaphat] became great to an unusual degree, גָּדֵל עַד לְמָעְלָה. It is therefore improper to say וְגָדוֹל, great. The same applies to Isaac.
towers בִּירָנִיּוֹת, derived from בִּירָה, huge towers for strength.
and store cities storage cities, to put in them wheat, wine and grain.

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

And beside him Heb. וְעַל יָדוֹ beside him; an example is (II Sam. 14:30): "Joab's field is adjoining mine (אֶל יָדִי)."
who gave generously to the Lord - Heb. הַמִּתְנַדֵּב. An example is (Jud. 5:2) "when the people offer themselves willingly (בְּהִתְנַדֵּב עָם), bless the Lord"

Chapter 18

Verse 1

Verse 2

And he went down at the end of years And in I Kings (22:2) it is written: "And it was in the third year, that Jehoshaphat came down, etc." This refers to the third year since he had released Ben Hadad (ibid. 20:34).
and he enticed him to go up to Ramoth Gilead as is written in the Book of I Kings (22: 3): "Do you know that Ramoth Gilead is ours," because when Jacob built the mound [of stones] there and called it Galead, he took possession of it, and our forefathers took Gilead and the heights (רָמוֹת),

which are a continuation and an attachment to the city. But when our forefathers in Moses' time seized Gilead, they were silent and refrained from taking it, because they did not care for it, or perhaps in Moses' time, they did take it, but later the nations took it from Israel's hands, but it is [in fact] ours.

Verse 3

Verse 4

Please inquire today the word of the Lord and [do not inquire] of the prophets of the baalim in whom you trust.

Verse 5

And the king of Israel gathered the prophets, four hundred And they were all true prophets, for he gathered for Jehoshaphat that which he had requested of him. And this is proven in the closely following text (verse 20f.): "And a spirit came forth, etc. and said: 'I will entice him...and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets,' for I will inspire them to say to Ahab: Ascend, and the Lord will deliver it into the hands of the king." From here we can deduce that they were prophets of the Lord, for they prophesied only the word of the Lord, for if they were false prophets, they would not entice, for they would prophesy only that which they were inventing from their minds. Moreover, Jehoshaphat later said, "Is there no other prophet of the Lord?" I know that they are prophets of the Lord, but I have a tradition from my grandfather's house that two prophets do not prophesy in the same style and with the same language, but all of these [prophets] are [unanimously] prophesying, "Ascend and prosper."

Verse 6

Verse 7

but always bad For this is what it says (I Kings 20:42): "Because you have released the man whom I designated for destruction, etc."

Verse 8

Bring Micaiah at once [Micaiah] is written with the "yud" missing. He called him by a different name, Micahu, in order to degrade him.

Verse 9

dressed in [their] attire the royal raiment and seated in a threshing floor He is telling us that when the prophets prophesied before them, they were sitting outside the city, and spies of the king of Aram came there and heard that he [the prophet] informed the king of Israel that he alone would fall in battle. That is the reason that the king of Aram commanded his forces (v. 30): "Attack neither small nor great; only the king of Israel," to fulfill the words of Micaiah. That is why it is written, "in a threshing floor," for it was a place where spies could spy. If the meeting had been inside the city, the spies of the king of Aram would not have been able to infiltrate, for they would have detected that they were spies; but when they were outside the city, even if they

[the Israelites] became aware of them, they could say, “We are going elsewhere, and the reason we drew near to the threshing floor is because of the great tumult and gathering of the armies here at the gate of the city; we were amazed, and turned off the road to see what was going on.” Consequently, the spies informed the king of Aram [what they had heard], who commanded to slay no one but the king of Israel. Otherwise, why did it enter his mind to command not to slay anyone of Israel, but the king? But he had spies who had heard Micaiah saying, (verses 16f.): “I saw all the Israelites scattered, etc. And the Lord said: These have no master.” This was a sign that the king would be slain, and that the Israelites would return each one to his house in peace. And they heard that he said, (v. 27): “If you return in peace...” The spies heard all and informed the king of Aram. The king of Aram then commanded to act in accordance with the word of Micaiah, and to slay only the king.

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Go up and triumph, and may they be delivered into your hand i.e., May you only prosper, and may they be delivered into your hands.

Verse 15

Verse 16

scattered over the mountains For when they flee from battle, they flee on the mountains to a refuge, like (Gen. 14:10): “and those who remained fled to the mountains.” In addition, the battle was on the heights of Gilead, a mountainous and hilly terrain.

And the Lord said: These have no master They are scattered like sheep on the mountains, because they have no shepherd, for their king will be slain.
Let them return each one to his house in peace Ahab alone will be killed, but the rest of the Israelites will return each one to his house in peace, as the king of Aram commanded his people.

Verse 17

Verse 18

and all the host of heaven were standing on His right and His left These are the angels of destruction who stand before Him.

Verse 19

Verse 20

And a certain spirit came forth The meaning is: And an angel came forth, for he says above, "and all the host of heaven, etc." One of the angels came forth and said, "I will entice him," as it is stated (Ps. 104:4): "He makes His angels spirits." [Cf. Comm. Dig. ad loc.] He preceded this account by stating, "and all the host of heaven were standing," so that you should not wonder when you read, "And a certain spirit came forth," who he was and where he came from. When he says, "and all the host of heaven were standing," it is to inform you where he came from: from among the rest of the spirits standing beside Him. Our Rabbis (Sanh. 89a, Targum) however, explained that this was the spirit of Naboth.

Verse 21

in the mouth of all his prophets He should place the words "Go up and triumph," in their mouths and he [Ahab] will go up and fall. This proves that they were true prophets who would prophesy only that which the Lord put into their mouths.
You will entice and you will prevail When an enticer comes to entice his fellow, the one being enticed sometimes understands that this one wishes to entice him, and he takes heed and does not allow himself to be enticed, but with Ahab, you will entice and you will prevail.

Verse 22

Verse 23

Verse 24

Behold you will see that Ahab will be killed.

Verse 25

Verse 26

Place this person in prison We did not see that he incarcerated him in prison previously, but since he says, "and return him," you may say that he had placed him in prison beforehand. If, however, you wish to say that they had never placed him in prison prior to this, "and return him" should not cause you any difficulty, because this is the style of the Scriptures, like (Ps. 9:18): "May the wicked return to the grave," and many similar other cases.
a scant amount of bread, etc. An example of this is (Isa. 30: 20): "scant bread and water of oppression."

Verse 27

Verse 28

Verse 29

disguise myself and go The meaning is: "I must make myself like a stranger and disguise myself in other clothes, so that they do not recognize that I am the king of Israel," for he was wary of Micaiah's words, saying, "If you return in peace, etc." And he said to Jehoshaphat, "I wish to disguise myself and go to war, for I fear that the Arameans heard that Micaiah said, 'If you return in peace,' and they will attack only me."
but you may wear your garb The royal costume and the coat of mail and the royal weapons, for there is no need for anyone to be wary of the prophet's words except the king of Israel, for his [the king of Aram's] spies told [him] the words of Micaiah.

Verse 30

Verse 31

and Jehoshaphat cried out He called to his troop and his armies to come to his aid, [using] the sign of the lion on his banner or the banner of the sons of Judah. And so is the custom when two troops engage in battle: each troop gives a name to the insignia of its division for the troop that is with it, so that if they separate from each other or if the troops mingle with one another, each troop shouts the name of its insignia, and they recognize the insignia and all gather together and become one group as originally. He did not, however, cry out to his God, as is proven from I Kings (22:32), for there it does not say, "and the Lord helped him, and God enticed them away from him," but it is written, And it was when the officers of the chariots saw that he was not the king of Israel for they immediately recognized and understood when he cried out the insignia of his division, as was explained. As soon as they recognized him, they turned away from him in accordance with the order of the king of Aram, and it was from the Lord that they recognized him.

Verse 32

Verse 33

And a man drew his bow An Israelite man intended to shoot at the camp of Aram, and inadvertently
and it hit The arrow [hit] the king of Israel.
between the scales and the coat of mail between the thong with which they attach the helmet on his head to the coat of mail. We cannot say that he was a heathen, because whom was he aiming at? Did not the king of Aram command, "Attack neither small nor great, except the king of Israel"? And he did not even aim at him, for it is written, "innocently." Perforce, you must say that the archer was an Israelite who intended to shoot at the camp of Aram, and inadvertently hit the king of Israel.
and he said to the charioteer to the one who drives the chariot.

and carry me out of the camp i.e., away from these front lines, and take me to the rear lines.

Verse 34

And the battle withdrew It withdrew, and not one of Israel was hurt except the king of Isra el, in accordance with the word of the prophet, (above verse 16): "These have no master. Let them return each one to his house in peace." It does not say לְשָׁלוֹם, because Ahab was slain.
was standing in the chariot He exerted himself and stood up so that the Israelites should not realize that he was wounded and flee, for the beginning of defeat is fleeing.

Chapter 19

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

for you have abolished the asheroth as above (17:6), "and he removed the high places [and the asherim], etc."
to seek God as above (17:4): "but he inquired of the God of his father, etc."

Verse 4

Verse 5

And he appointed judges When the seer told him, "good things were found in you, for you abolished the asheroth," he approached the Sepher Torah [to see] whether he had abolished them properly. He first saw that it was written (Deut. 12:2f.): "You shall utterly destroy...and you shall burn their asherim with fire and cut down the images of their gods," and he remembered that it is written in כִּי תִשָּׂא (Exod. 34:13): "And you shall break down their monuments, etc." He wondered why he had pleased the Lord by abolishing the asherim, the Jewish asherim, for [the Torah] only warned about their asherim. He went back to [the Torah portion] (Deut. 16:18): "Judges and law enforcing agents," and found written (verse 21): "You shall not plant an asherah." Then he rejoiced that he had abolished them. He also saw written there: "Judges and law enforcing agents you shall appoint for yourself," and immediately "he appointed judges,"
strong ones.
in all the fortified cities of Judah, for every city He first appointed strong [judges] in all the fortified cities of Judah to coerce them [the people] and compel them to [accept] judgment. He later appointed judges who were not as strong for the cities that were not fortified, for they [the inhabitants] were more afraid to rebel than those who dwelt in the fortified cities, for they felt secure in their fortified cities.

Verse 6

for you do not judge for man The meaning is: Do not think in your heart: What difference does it make if we pervert the law to declare our friends innocent and pervert the rights of the poor and favor the rich? Is it not so that the judgment is not for the Lord? Therefore, it says, "for the Lord." It is for Him. If you convict the innocent, it is as though you take from your Creator's property and pervert the law of Heaven, by bestowing a distorted verdict. Therefore, "see what you are doing," and may your heart be in every judgment, as if the Holy One, blessed be He, is standing before you in judgment, and this is the meaning of: "and [He] is with you in the matter of the judgment." In Sanhedrin (6b) it is stated "What are you doing, for you do not judge for man but for the Lord." This is explained [as follows]: Perhaps the judge will say, "How does this problem concern me?" Therefore, Scripture states: "and it is with you concerning the matter of the judgment," i.e., it is incumbent upon you to rule justly. And the judge must deal only with that which he sees with his own eyes.

Verse 7

for with the Lord your God there is neither injustice, favoritism, nor bribe-taking and He is with you in judgment; therefore, He does not wish you to commit injustice in judgment.

Verse 8

And also in Jerusalem...set up judges even though he himself was in Jerusalem.
for the judgment of the Lord and for quarrels It is appropriate to use the term "judgment" (לְמִשְׁפַּט) concerning money matters, an example being (Num. 27:11) "and it shall be for the Children of Israel as a legal norm (לְחֻקַּת מִשְׁפָּט)." "And for quarrels" (וְלָרִיב) refers to capital cases and bodily injuries, an example being (Exod. 21:18) "And if men quarrel, etc." (יְרִיבוּן).

Verse 9

So shall you do Because of alacrity, caution, and encouragement, he added a "nun," like (Gen. 32: 5): "So shall you say (תֹּאמְרוּן)," and like (Ruth 2:8f.): "and here you shall stay (תִּדְבָּקִין) with my maidens. Your eyes shall be on the field that they reap (יִקְצרוּן)," and like (ibid. 3:18): "until you know (תֵּדְעִין) how the matter will be resolved, for the man will not rest, etc."

Verse 10

between blood[shed] and blood[shed] between the bloodshed of an unintentional murder and an intentional one.
you shall admonish them your brethren.
and there be wrath upon you and upon your brethren Therefore so shall you do You shall admonish your brethren.
and you will not be guilty In any case, you [will not be guilty], for if you accept the admonition, there will be no wrath upon you, and there will also be no guilt upon you in anything since you performed the duty which was incumbent upon you to perform.

Verse 11

and may the Lord be with the good with the one who performs that which is good and upright.

Chapter 20

Verse 1

and with them, some of the Ammonites This is Amalek. Why were they called Ammonites? Because they changed their dress and their language to resemble that of the Ammonites and mingled with them, and came to wage war against Israel. This can be proven below in the chapter (verse 22): “And at the time they commenced, etc. the Lord placed liers-in-wait against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir.” We find that the Ammonites mentioned here are Amalekites who changed their tongue and their dress. This is what the Kallir set down in the section of Zachor: Remember the tyrant who hid among the Ammonites; he breached the vineyards of Ein-Gedi when he was brought, i.e., remember what Amalekite the tyrant did - he hid among the Ammonites and came to breach the vineyards of Israel at that time, as it is written: “and behold they are in Hazazon-Tamar which is Ein-Gedi,” and Ein-Gedi is close to the territory of Amalek, as is stated in (Gen. 14:7): “and they struck down the whole field of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwell in Hazazon- Tamar.”

Verse 2

the same is Ein-Gedi i.e., They said to him, “They have already come so close to us.”

Verse 3

Verse 4

also from all the cities of Judah That you should not say, when it is stated initially, “And the Judeans gathered to seek,” that these were the inhabitants of Jerusalem only, but they came from all the cities of Judah.

Verse 5

Verse 6

and that You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations and in Your hand is strength and might to conduct Your rule over them; therefore, we beseech You to save us from them.
and in Your hand is strength and might in wars and might, hardiess in French, boldness.
and no one can stand with You No creature can stand against You of all the kingdoms of the nations, and an example of this is (Josh. 1:5): “No man shall stand before You.” (Rabbi Menahem the son of Helbo explained it in this manner.)

Verse 7

and given it to the seed of Abraham Therefore, it is incumbent upon You to preserve it in their hands and to drive these peoples out. Even a

flesh and blood king, and even an ordinary man, when he gives a present to his friend and someone comes to rob him of it, he exerts himself to preserve it in his hand. How much more so [should] You [do so]! Perhaps You will say, "I gave it to them only temporarily." Therefore, it says, "forever." You gave it to us for an eternal inheritance.

Verse 8

and therein they built You a Sanctuary for Your name, saying that "should evil come upon us, etc." judgment or any judgment, whether sword, pestilence, or famine.

Verse 9

and we shall cry out to You from our distress in the Temple.
and You will hear and save as Solomon prayed before You, and You promised him to do so, as is written (above 6:24): "And if Your people is struck down," continuing with the entire chapter until (verse 30): "and forgive and give to each man according to his ways." And the Lord accepted his prayer, as it is written (ibid. 7:12): "And the Lord appeared to Solomon, and said to him: I have heard your prayer," continuing with the entire chapter until (ibid. verse 14) "and forgive their sin and heal their land." Now I pray that You remember the promise which You promised him, and hear and save us from our enemies who are coming upon us.

Verse 10

And now about all that You promised us to save us from our enemies who are coming upon us.
behold the children of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, against whom You did not permit Israel to come to wage war.
when they came out of the land of Egypt and they should have remembered the kindness [we performed] and come to our aid, but they - not only did they not remember our kindness, to be with us in all our troubles, but they repayed us with evil and attacked us.

Verse 11

to drive us out of Your inheritance, which You caused us to inherit You Yourself. Therefore, on what basis can they contest our inheritance?

Verse 12

but our eyes are upon You to save us.

Verse 13

also their infants It is customary that when troops attack a country, the infants, wives, and children flee the villages to the fortified cities.

Verse 14

Verse 15

You shall not fear, neither shall you be dismayed This refers back to what they said, (verse 12) "we have no strength before this multitude." The prophet said to them, "Although they outnumber you, do not fear them."

for the war is not yours but God’s This refers back to (verse 12) “and we do not know,” and the prophet replied, “It is surely as you have said, that your eyes and your trust are upon the Holy One, blessed be He, to save you.” So will He do, for the war is not yours but God’s.

Verse 16

on the ascent to Haziz the name of a place.

Verse 17

set yourself This refers back to (verse 15) “for the war is not yours.” and see the salvation of the Lord This refers back to the above: “Have You, our God, not caused us to inherit (sic)?” And the Holy One, blessed be He, said to them, “You are right. It is up to Me to preserve it in your hands.”
Tomorrow go forth before them and I shall wage war on your behalf. And they believed, and hurried, and arose early in the morning.

Verse 18

Verse 19

Verse 20

and you will be believed Heb. וְתֵאָמֵנוּ. You will be trustworthy and prosper. An example is (Isa. 7: 9) “for you cannot be believed (לֹא תֵאָמֵנוּ).”

Verse 21

Verse 22

the Lord placed liers-in-wait He placed liers-in-wait to annihilate them and destroy them. An example is found in the case of Abijah the son of Rehoboam (13:13): “And Jeroboam turned the ambush.” Similarly, the Holy One, blessed be He, turned them one against another, and later, Moab returned and aided the children of Ammon, and they both rose up against the children of Seir.

Verse 23

when they finished with the inhabitants of Seir, each one helped his friend to destroy The Holy One, blessed be He, turned one against the other until they were completely destroyed; until the corpses fell to the ground with no survivors.

Verse 24

Verse 25

to the extent that they could not carry them away because of the quantity.

Verse 26

they congregated to the valley of Berachah To the valley which was later called the valley of Berachah, because of the incident [that took place there], as is explained immediately following, as Scripture states for there they blessed the Lord and gave thanks for all the good that He had done for them, that He saved them from their enemies.

Verse 27

Verse 28

And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries, with harps, and with trumpets These three musical instruments correspond to “all the men of Judah and Jerusalem and Jehoshaphat.”

Verse 29

Verse 30

Verse 31

Verse 32

And he went in the way of his father Asa and did not turn away From what did he not turn away? to do what was right From the good and upright way of his father he did not turn away, but from the bad ways of Asa he did turn away, as is written (above 16:2): “And Asa brought forth silver and gold,” and the entire incident, but Jehoshaphat did not do so, but trusted in the Holy One, blessed be He, all his life.

Verse 33

Verse 34

in the words of Jehu the son of Hanani who said to King Jehoshaphat, (19:2) “[Did you go] to aid the wicked?”

Verse 35

Verse 36

Verse 37

and could not go - Heb. וְלֹא עָצְרוּ, lit., they did not hold in. The meaning is: The ships could not muster the strength to go, and they were broken.

Chapter 21

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

a kingdom - Heb. נִיר. Its meaning is a yoke over Israel.

Verse 8

In his days, Edom rebelled, etc. For David had destroyed all the males in Edom, and he appointed governors over them instead of a king, and they paid him tribute, and all the kings of Judah did similarly: they appointed governors who pleased them. And from the days of Joram and thereafter, they [the Edomites] rebelled against the authority of Judah.

Verse 9

who surrounded him He smote those Edomites who surrounded him and supported him to aid him, for it was their custom that when they were victorious in war, they would seize the mighty men and bring them with them lest they join their enemies to aid the Edomites, their countrymen. In this case, he got up at night suddenly and slew them. Our Sages, however, explained “those who surrounded him” as “those near him.”

Verse 10

And Edom rebelled Was it not already stated above (verse 8): “In his days, Edom rebelled?” But this is the manner of Scripture: because a verse is interposed, and it now wishes to continue with “then Libnah rebelled,” it repeats the [original words] stating, “And Edom rebelled.” then Libnah rebelled It belonged to Judah, and it was situated on the

border of Edom, as is written in the Book of Joshua (15:21, 42): "And the outermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the border of Edom." When they saw that the Edomites rebelled, they too rebelled, for they lived on the border of Edom, and they aided Edom. This is [the meaning of] "then Libnah rebelled."
because he had forsaken the Lord, the God of his forefathers [Scripture] explains what it was that caused them to rebel in his time more than during [the time of] the rest of the kings of Judah who preceded him.

Verse 11

and led the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray - Heb. וַיזְנוּת. It is appropriate to use the term harlotry in connection with anyone who forsakes and exchanges the fear of the Holy One, blessed be He, for the idolatry of star and planet worship - for such a person behaves in the manner of a promiscuous woman who commits adultery with others, and similar to this are (Deut. 31:16): "and this people will rise and go astray (וְזָנָה) after the foreign gods of the land"; (Hos. 1:2): "for the land will go astray (זָנה תִּזְנֶה), etc."

Verse 12

And a letter came to him from Elijah After he had ascended to heaven, this prophetic letter came to him [i.e., to Joram].

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17

and split it - Heb. וַיִּבְקָעוּהָ, like (Isa. 7:6): "Let us go up to Judah and provoke it and breach its walls וְנַבְקָעֶנָּה and so, (II Kings 3:26): "to break a way (לְהַבְקִיעַ)o the king of Edom."

Verse 18

Verse 19

and at the end the end that the prophet had foretold him of.
and his people did not make him a burning even though he required that burning because he had been ailing with malignant illnesses, and his flesh reeked. The Holy One, blessed be He, did not wish to honor him by making a burning for him, and he was also not buried in the graves of the kings.

Verse 20

and he departed joyless The meaning is: all his life he was in distress and in illnesses, and with him was fulfilled (Deut. 30:15): “See, I have set before you today life, etc.” and (Job 14:1) “short of days and full of fear.”

Chapter 22

Verse 1

Verse 2

forty two years old But in II Kings (8:26), Scripture says: “twenty-two years old.” How is this possible? Moreover, according to this, the son was two years his father’s senior, [because Joram ascended the throne at thirty-two and died eight years later, making him forty years old upon his death,] but two years before Joram his father was born, this decree was issued upon the house of David that it would end with the house of Ahab, and so Scripture states (below verse 7): “And from God was Ahaziah’s downfall, etc.” and on the day that Asa took Omri’s daughter for Jehoshaphat his son, this decree was issued. So it was taught in Seder Olam (ch. 17) and in the Tosefta of Sotah (12:3). But throughout Scripture we do not find that Jehoshaphat married Omri’s daughter, but I did find (above 18:1): “and he allied himself in marriage with Ahab,” and perhaps that was his sister that he married, and in the thirty first year of Asa he married her, as it is said in (I Kings 16:23): “And (sic) in the thirty-first year of Asa, etc. Omri reigned.” And when Asa married his daughter to Jehoshaphat his son, Omri gained importance, and they slew Tibni. Figure from the thirty-first year of Asa until Ahaziah reigned, and you will find forty two years. Further, one verse states (II Kings 8:25): “In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, etc., Ahaziah the son of Joram reigned,” and another verse states (ibid. 9:29): “And in the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab, Ahaziah became king.” Perforce, his father did not die until the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab, because it is written (ibid. 8: 16f.): “In the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, etc., Joram the son of Jehoshaphat became king, etc., and he reigned eight years.” And that which Scripture states further, “In the eleventh year of Joram,” is because he reigned one year during his father’s lifetime since his father was smitten with severe illnesses, as it is written (above 21:18.): “And after all this, the Lord plagued him, etc.” (22: 1) “And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king,” for one year during his father’s lifetime, and that is what is written: “In the eleventh year of Joram.” And where Scripture says: “In the twelfth year of Joram,” it means that after his father died, it was the twelfth year of Joram.

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

and the Arameans smote Joram - Heb. הָרַמִּים, like הָאֲרַמִּים. In many places the "aleph" is missing, as for instance (II Sam. 19:14): "And to Amasa you shall say (תֹּאמְרוּ)." And sometimes the "aleph" is added to a word, for instance (Ps. 89:1): "Ethan the Ezrahite (הָאֶזְרָחִי)," like הַזַּרְחִי, [descendant of Zerah], and the "aleph" of (Job 13:17): "and to my speech (וְאָזְנָתִי) in your ears."

Verse 6

because of the smiters who smote him כִּי הַמַּכִּים. The meaning is: מִן הַמַּכִּים, because of the smiters, and so it is in II Kings (8:29).
and Azariah the son of Jehoram This is Ahaziah, and so Scripture states (ad loc.): "and Ahaziah the son of Joram went down to see Joram."

Verse 7

downfall Heb. תְּבוּסַת. The meaning is confusion, like (Ezek. 16:6): "wallowing (מִתְבּוֹסֶסֶת) in your blood."

Verse 8

and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers He does not mention Ahaziah's brothers because they were slain in the days of Joram their father, as it is written (above 21:17): "And they marched upon Judah and split it, etc., and no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons."

Verse 9

Verse 10

she arose and destroyed - Heb. וַתְּדַבֵּר, an expression of דֶּבֶר, pestilence. In II Kings (11:1), it is written: וַתְּאַבֵּד. Concerning this generation, David recited: (Ps. 12:1): "For the conductor on the sheminith," for David foresaw with the holy spirit that in the eighth generation [of his dynasty] all his descendants would be slain by Athaliah, for there are eight generations from Solomon till here. And he prayed that his seed would survive for a remembrance, and said, (ibid. verse 2): "Save, O Lord, for the pious are gone, etc." In II Kings (11:2), Scripture states that she killed them by poisoning them, for it is written: "and she stole him away from the dying (הַמְּמוּתִים) children of the king"; we read: הַמּוּמָתִים the slain. Both the traditional reading and the masoretic text have authority. הַמּוּמָתִים means that they already died, and the masoretic text in which the word used is הַמְּמוּתִים means that they were dying in agony. This is written in the continuous present tense, i.e., not all at once but continuously being crushed by illnesses, and then dying. An example is (Jer. 16:4): "Dying of (מְמוּתֵי) sicknesses they shall die, etc. and with famine," because they too will not die immediately.

Verse 11

in the bed chamber The Targum [Jonathan to II Kings 11:2] renders: in the chamber of the beds, i.e., in the forecourt, in the room where the priests sleep, but Rabbi Solomon of blessed memory (Rashi ad loc) explained it as the attic of the Holy of Holies, as it is written in Kings (verse 3): "And he hid with her in the House of the Lord, etc.," and concerning him, David said, (Ps. 27:5): "For He will hide me in His Tabernacle, etc." He calls it the bed chamber based on (Song 1:13):

“between my breasts he will lie,” and that is what the Kallir, Rabbi Eliezer Kara composed (in Zichronoth for the first day of Rosh Hashanah in the section devoted to the letter “nun”): If He said to cause them to totter, the smashing of the bed-chamber He will remember for an atonement. The destruction of the Temple will atone for them.

Chapter 23

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

And the entire congregation enacted a covenant in the House of God with the king that they would support him.

Verse 4

of those coming in on the Sabbath And also those leaving on the Sabbath, as is written below (verse 8): “and each one took his men, those coming in on the Sabbath with those leaving on the Sabbath.” The watches were renewed on the Sabbath (See Taanith 2:6,7), viz. the priests and the Levites; one [watch] would leave and one would come in. Jehoiada detained the watch that was leaving with the watch that was coming in, and divided them into three divisions.

Verse 5

And a third shall be in the king’s palace to guard that they would not gather about him to assassinate him.
and a third This is the second one.
in the Yesod Gate But in II Kings (ad loc.) it is written “the Sur Gate.” In Yoma Yerushalmi (in extant editions it is found in Erubin Yerushalmi 5:1) it is explained that the Yesod Gate had seven names: 1) the Sur Gate, because they would purify those smitten with zaraath there [by placing the blood of the guilt offering and the oil] on their thumbs, reminiscent of [the verse] (Lam. 4:15): “They called out to them: ‘Depart (סוּרוּ), unclean [ones]!’”

Verse 6

and all the people shall keep lest they enter the House of the Lord.

Verse 7

with his weapons in his hand His weapons in his hand.

Verse 8

of those coming in on the Sabbath with those leaving on the Sabbath, for he did not dismiss those divisions who were leaving to go home, but he detained them with those who were arriving. A similarity to [the word פָּטָר] is found in (I Chron. 9:33): “in the chambers, who are exempt

(פְּטוּרִים)"; i.e., they were exempt from all work in the forecourt, for day and night it was incumbent upon them to perform the work to guard the forecourts and the chambers; they were therefore exempt from all other work in the forecourt.

Verse 9

Verse 10

and each one with his sword in his hand - Heb. וּשְׁלָחוֹ his weapon, like (Joel 2:8): "and upon the sword (הַשֶּׁלַח)."

Verse 11

the crown This is the crown that David took from Rabbah of the children of Ammon, as it is written (I Chron 20:2): "And David took the crown of Malkam off his head, etc., and it was on David's head." From then on, the kings of Judah would wear that crown on their heads.
and the testimony This is a Sepher Torah, and so Scripture states (Deut. 17:19): "and he shall read from it as long as he lives." Our Sages stated (Abodah Zarah 4a), however, that the crown itself was the testimony, for it would not fit anyone unfit for the throne.

Verse 12

Verse 13

standing on his stand as it says (above 6:12f.): "And he stood before the altar of the Lord, etc. for Solomon had made a copper laver, etc., and he stood on it and kneeled on his knees." It is still customary today that when they assemble together, the king or the duke stands on a high place, so that they should be able to see him and hear his words.
"Treason! Treason!" Rebellion! Rebellion!

Verse 14

the ranks - Heb. הַמַּעֲמָדוֹת. Rashi (II Kings 11:8) explains: the place of the king's entry from his palace to the House of the Lord. I do not know the origin of the word, and Jonathan rendered it as "rows" [like סְדָרִים].
and whoever follows her is to be put to death Do not allow her to go out by way of the exit of the forecourt to the city, lest she find helpers who will join her.
and whoever follows her to her aid.
is to be put to death Put him to death.

Verse 15

And they made a place for her a place to escape.

Verse 16

between himself and all the people and the king that all of them, the king and the people, should follow the Lord.

Verse 17

Verse 18

appointees - Heb. פְּקֻדּוֹת, people appointed to offer burnt offerings and all that is mentioned in this chapter. An example is (Jer. 20:1): "And Pashhur heard, etc. and he was the chief officer (פָּקִיד) in the House of the Lord."

Verse 19

so that no one who was unclean should enter for any matter There were also appointees [whose job it was] not to allow any unclean person to enter the forecourt for any reason.

Chapter 24

Verse 1

Verse 2

all the days of Jehoiada And in II Kings (12:3) it is written: "all his days, [he did] that which Jehoiada the priest instructed him," but after he died, the officers of the king came to prostrate themselves to him and to deify him (below verse 17). In the midrash (Exod. Rabbah 8:2, Tan. Buber, Va'era) it is explained that, because he hid in the Holy of Holies and was not harmed, they said, "You are fit to be a god."

Verse 3

and he begot sons and daughters Because it says below (verse 25) that Joash slew the sons of Jehoiada, it was necessary to note that he had sons.

Verse 4

Verse 5

and gather money from all Israel i.e., Gather the money that the Israelites were accustomed to giving yearly, as it is written (Exod. 30:14): "Each one included in the census," and in II Kings (12: 5): "All money of the hallowed things that is brought to the House of the Lord, in current money, etc." There were three types of money: (1) the money of all those counted in the census, viz. the shekels for every year, as it is said (Exod. 30:14): "Each one included in the census," lit., "[the money of anyone] who passes," reminiscent of "each one who passes." (2) Personal donations - money donated by individuals to reflect the value of their souls, like one who says, "My value shall be incumbent upon me to donate." (3) All donations inspired by a person's heart for the repairs of the Temple.
and hasten to the matter," but the Levites did not hasten It is explained in II Kings (12:6f.) that the king said, "Let the priests take [the money] for themselves, each one from his acquaintance," but they neglected to impose upon their acquaintances, and when the king saw this,

he said to them, (ibid. verse 8): "Do not take money from your acquaintances [any longer], but deliver it for the repairs of the House." This is what is written here: "'and hasten to the matter,' but the Levites did not hasten."

Verse 6

the tax of Moses the servant of the Lord i.e., the shekels which he mandated upon them in the desert.
the tax of - Heb. מַשְׂאַת, reminiscent of (Exod. 30:12): "When you take (כִּי תִשָּׂא) [the sum]."

Verse 7

For the wicked Athaliah—her sons had breached He had to say this because Solomon had built it as a new sturdy edifice. Only 125 years elapsed from the time that Solomon built it until the days of Joash and it was already breached. Had Athaliah and her sons not breached it, it would have continued to endure, for more than 200 years elapsed from Joash to Josiah and they did not have to repair it until Josiah, although Joash did not make it new as it was originally. One hundred and twenty-five years elapsed from the completion of the Temple until Joash. How so? Solomon reigned 40 years, and in the fourth year of his reign he commenced to build it. It took 7 years to build, totaling 10 years, leaving him 30. Rehoboam reigned 17, totaling 47; Abijah 3, totaling 50; Asa 41, totaling 91; Jehoshaphat 25, totaling 116; Jehoram 8, totaling 124, and Ahaziah one, totaling 125. And from Joash until Josiah were 200 years. How so? Amaziah reigned 29 years, Uzziah 52, Jotham 16, Ahaz 16, Hezekiah 29, Manasseh 55, Amon 2, totaling 200 less 1, in addition to those years that Joash lived after he had repaired the Temple. We find that they would not have had to repair the damage of the Temple had not the wicked Athaliah and her sons breached it.
For Athaliah, etc. It is therefore no wonder that it needed repairs so soon, and also no wonder that there was no hallowed silver and gold in the treasuries of the House of the Lord, so that they had to make an announcement in Judah and Jerusalem to bring the tax, for they had also used all the hallowed things of the House of the Lord for the baalim.

Verse 8

and they made one chest and in II Kings (12:10), it is written: "and he bored a hole in its door," and through that hole they would cast the hallowed things, but they did not open the door lest a thief come and steal from it.
and they placed it in the gate of the House of the Lord, to the outside so that all the generous people would be able to come and deposit the donation to the Lord therein.

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

and when they saw that there was much money then the king's scribe came.

and the appointee of the head priest The servant appointed under the head priest, who was the assistant to the high priest, together with the king's scribe. In II Kings (12:11), it is written: "the king's scribe and the high priest went up." The meaning is that the king's scribe went up, and the high priest also sent his appointee, who was the scribe who wrote what the high priest commanded him, because it was unfitting and degrading for the high priest to go with the king's servants.
empty the chest - Heb. וְיִעֲרוּ. A similar instance is (Gen. 24:20): "and emptied (וַתְּעַר) her pitcher."
carry it Every day, when they saw that there was much money in it, they would bring it to the king's appointee within the forecourt, empty it, carry it, and return it to its place outside the gate of the Lord.

Verse 12

Verse 13

and the work was improved A similar instance is (Neh. 3:34): "Will they revive the stones" of Ezra. Also, above (I Chron. 11:8): "and Joab sustained.'
on its base - Heb. עַל מַתְכֵּנְתּוֹ, on its base.

Verse 14

service vessels and pestles (Stessel in German.) This is [the implement] with which they crush spices in the mortar. A similar instance is (Prov. 27:22): "If you crush a fool in a mortar [among grain with a pestle (בָּעֵלְי)"]. Rabbi Isaac the son of Samuel of Narbonne told me this. Others say that וְהַעֲלוֹת refers to boards upon which meat is cut, and an example of this appears in Bezah (1:5): We may not move a board (עלי) to cut meat upon it.
and spoons and gold and silver vessels But in II Kings (12:14) it is written: "But there would not be made for the House of the Lord silver pitchers." How is this possible? It is explained in Kethuboth, chapter 13 (106): Rav Huna inquired of Rav: May vessels of ministry be made of material hallowed for the repair of the Temple, etc.

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17

Verse 18

Verse 19

Verse 20

above the people Higher than the people, in order to make his voice heard. In Lamentations Rabbah (Proem 23), it is interpreted as meaning that he relied on himself; he was a prince higher than all the people, a prophet and a priest, and it was Yom Kippur, and he was the king's son-in-law, and he was not afraid to say the prophecy. Concerning this incident, it was stated (Lam. 2:20): "shall priest and prophet be slain in the Sanctuary of the Lord?"

Verse 21

Verse 22

and upon his death, he said, "May the Lord see and requite." For they have slain me only because I spoke as the Omnipresent's medium, and since I have been slain for His sake, it is proper and fitting that He requite my blood. And so it was: his blood was immediately requited, for "it came to pass at the turn of the year, etc."

Verse 23

And it came to pass at the turn of the year Because the sons of Judah sinned more than the other tribes, as it is written above (verse 18): "And they forsook the House of the Lord, the God of their fathers."
and they destroyed all the princes of the people This refers back to the above (verse 17): "And after the death of Jehoiada, the princes of Judah came and prostrated themselves to the king," and caused Joash to sin after them. Because of that, they were paid in kind: the army of Aram came and destroyed all the princes of the people.
from among the people from being a people.

Verse 24

Verse 25

for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest Because of the blood of Zechariah, who was the son of Jehoiada, for he should have remembered the favors and the loving-kindness that Jehoiada had bestowed upon him, and because of that iniquity, his servants conspired against him and slew him in his bed. They meted out to him a measure corresponding to a measure. Because Zechariah was slain, tranquil and secure, with nothing to worry about, for he was the son of Jehoiada, and out of respect for him [Jehoiada], they respected him [Zechariah], and spilled his blood onto the ground, therefore, he [Jehoash] too was slain in tranquility and security in his bed.

Verse 26

the Moabitess What difference does it make who they were and from whom they were descended? However, [Scripture means that] those ingrates who did not show their gratitude for the favor of Abraham our father to Lot their father, who fought with the kings when he heard that Lot was captured, and they hired Balaam to curse his sons; [they were chosen] to punish Joash, who [similarly] did not show gratitude to Jehoiada and slew his son Zechariah. It is explained this way in Mechilta (Exod. 17:8).

Chapter 25

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

for God is not with Israel, all the sons of Ephraim because Jeroboam was of the tribe of Ephraim, and he was the first to cause Israel to sin. And in every generation thereafter he remained a stumbling block for them, for they worshipped the golden calves of Jeroboam.

Verse 8

But if you come The meaning is: If you do not believe my words, will you not try [to put effort into your military campaign?] Come, do, and strengthen yourself for war.
to help or to cause to stumble The meaning is: He has the strength to help you without the army of Ephraim and to cause you to stumble if you take them with you.

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

and they were all split open, etc...after [Amaziah] had come, etc. In Lam. Rabbah it says about him, "whether he is angry or he laughs" (Prov. 29:9).

Verse 13

raided the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-Horon after they returned to their place, as above, "they were very angry with Judah and returned to their place." For if it were not so, i.e., if they had raided the cities of Judah as soon as they left Amaziah, Scripture would have said, "and they raided the cities of Judah from Beth-Horon to Samaria," [i.e., going from Judah to Samaria].

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

that God has given counsel to destroy you i.e., If you do not hearken to My advice to follow the straight path, you should know, O king, that the Lord has given counsel to destroy you because you have done this, and have not hearkened to the counsel. Now what is the counsel? That he enticed you to provoke the king of Israel and to fall before him, as it is written: "And Amaziah the king of Judah took counsel, and he sent to Joash, etc."

Verse 17

Come, let us confront each other to show our might on horses with spears.

Verse 18

The thistle that was in Lebanon which is of short stature.
sent to the cedar which is the greatest prince of all the trees.
passed by and trampled the thistle The cedar did not wish to kill it because it was degrading in his eyes to cut down the thistle, but a beast of the field passed by and trampled it in contempt, for how did he dare to send such a great insult to the lofty cedar? You too are like the thistle, for you have only two tribes, and now my servants will rise up against you and trample you when they hear of this disgrace.

Verse 19

and your heart has made you haughty to pursue glory, and you wish to be glorified also on my account. In II Kings (14:10), the reading is: "Retain your honor by staying home."

Verse 20

because this was from God in order to deliver them into their hands i.e., into their hands, as above (verse 16): "I know that God has given counsel to destroy you."

Verse 21

in Beth-Shemesh the war took place. It was necessary to say this lest you ask why they brought Amaziah to Jerusalem and not to Samaria when they seized him. [The answer is] that Beth-Shemesh was near Jerusalem.

Verse 22

Verse 23

and breached the wall of... He said, “From now on, he will not rebel against me, because his heart will not be so haughty since the wall has been breached”

Verse 24

that were found in the House of God with Obed-Edom for he and his sons were keepers of the treasures all their lives.
and the hostage children For the Jews did not permit Amaziah to be king any longer in Jerusalem until he made the children of the officers hostages so that they would no longer rebel against him, and so did Jonathan translate it in II Kings (14:14): “the children of the officers.” Rabbi Joseph (Kara) explained “the hostage children” to mean those hostages that the king had taken as security so that their fathers would not rebel against him. This, however, does not appear correct to me because we do not find that Judah had such power over others that they could have [forced them] to give Judah their children as hostages.

Verse 25

Verse 26

Verse 27

And from the time that Amaziah turned away from following the Lord and was defeated by the king of Israel, immediately they conspired against him in Jerusalem to kill him, because each one was grieved over his son, his brother, and his kinsman who were slain because of him, because he provoked the king of Israel.
and he fled to Lachish a fortified city against which Sennacherib waged war. He fled to Lachish, where he remained fifteen years until they followed him to Lachish and assassinated him there. And during those fifteen years that he was in Lachish, Jecoliah, Uzziah’s mother, reigned in his stead. This is how it appears to me. In the commentary of Rabbi Joseph (Kara), I saw that during those fifteen years that he was in Lachish, Uzziah his son reigned in his stead, but it is incorrect to interpret it in this manner, for it is written immediately following (26:1): “who was sixteen years old.” We find that when his father fled, he was only one year old. Moreover, if this is the case, it should say, “took Uzziah and made him king instead of his father during his lifetime.” Rather, Scripture intimated that he did not reign during his father’s lifetime.

Chapter 26

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord like all the proper things that his father did, but not like his wickedness.

Verse 5

in the days of Zechariah This refers to Uzziah, and he was called by three names: Uzziah, Zechariah, and Azariah, similar to (II Kings 14): Yehoahaz/Ahaziah.
who understood the visions of God who understood that the fear of God is good, and feared the Lord.

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

And Uzziah built towers, etc. He had to strengthen the parts of the wall they breached in his father’s days.

Verse 10

plowmen - Heb. אִכָּרִים, aratkori in Italian, plowmen.

for he loved the soil It is explained in Genesis Rabbah (See 22:3): Two had a passion for agriculture, and no good was found in them: he and Cain.

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

engines, invented by skillful men - Heb. חִשְׁבֹּנוֹת מַחֲשֶׁבֶת חוּשַׁב, similar to (Exod. 28:6): "expert work (חוּשַׁב מַעֲשֵׂה.)" He made war engines with craftsmanship, such as siege mounds and battering rams, as it is written (Prov. 24:6): "For you shall wage war with strategies."

Verse 16

and he trespassed against the Lord, his God - Heb. וַיִּמְעַל. Here it is appropriate to say מְעִילָה (trespass), for he sinned inadvertently, similar to (Lev. 5:15): "If a person commits a trespass (תִּמְעֹל מָעַל) and sins inadvertently."
and he came into the Temple of the Lord for he said, "It is proper for a king to serve the King of glory."

Verse 17

Verse 18

Verse 19

and in his hand was a censer to burn and he wished to strike the priest who prevented him from burning incense.

Verse 20

Verse 21

in a house of retirement Heb. בֵּית הַחָפְשִׁית. And in Yerushalmi (unknown) it is explained that he made himself a house in the cemetery, reminiscent of (Ps. 88:6): "Among the dead, a free man (חָפְשִׁי)."
for it had been decreed upon him to come no longer among people, similar to (Esther 2:1): "and that which was decreed upon her."

Verse 22

Verse 23

in the cemetery but not in the cave with the kings.

Chapter 27

Verse 1

Verse 2

as all that his father Uzziah the good deeds that his father had done. That is what R. Simeon ben Yohai said in Tractate Sotah (sic. Should be Sukkah 45b): If Abraham would take upon himself all the sins of the generations until his time, I would take upon myself the sins of the generations from Abraham until my time. And if Jotham the son of Uzziah were with me, we would take upon ourselves the sins of all the generations from Abraham until the end of all generations, for in all the kings before him and after him we find sin, except in Jotham. Concerning David it is written, (I Kings 15:5): "Only concerning the matter of Uriah the Hittite"; concerning Solomon it is written, (ibid. 11:4): "His wives turned his heart away"; Rehoboam forsook the Lord's Torah; Abijah (ibid. 15:3): "went in all his father's sins"; Asa took silver and gold from the treasuries of the House of the Lord and put the prophet in prison; Jehoshaphat associated with a wicked man (Ahab and his son Ahaziah); Joram killed his brother; Ahaziah's mother advised him to sin; Joash killed Zechariah and was [later punished by being] sexually molested (Yer. Kid. 1:7); Amaziah prostrated himself before the graven images of Seir; Uzziah entered the Temple to burn incense; Ahaz went in the ways of the kings of Israel and also made monuments for the baalim; Hezekiah became haughty and there was anger upon him, and the sages did not concur with him on three things that he did (Pes. 4:9); Manasseh did evil in the eyes of the Lord; Josiah did not heed the words of prophecy from God; Zedekiah did evil in the eyes of the Lord and did not humble himself before Jeremiah (below 36:12). In Jotham, however, no trace of sin was found. (R. Eliezer the son of Moses told me this.)
the people were still acting corruptly as it is written in II Kings (15:35): "the people were still slaughtering and burning incense [on the high places]."

Verse 3

and in the wall of the rampart - Heb. עֹפֶל, similar to (Isa. 32:14): "rampart and tower (עֹפֶל וָבַחַן)." He built strongholds.

Verse 4

and in the forests he built palaces - Heb. בִּירָנִית, an expression of a large palace (בִּירָה).

Chapter 28

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

Maaseiah, the king’s son [I.e., the son of] Ahaz. Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim slew [him].
and Azrikam - Heb. וְאֶת וְאֶת, similar to (Gen. 36:24): “and Aiah and Anah (וְאַיָּה וְעָנָה),” and similarly, (Ps. 76:7): “and chariot and horse (וָרֶכֶב וָסוּס) were stunned.”

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

And the men who were mentioned by name arose above (verse 12). Who were they? Those men who were of the heads of the sons of Ephraim: Azariah the son of Jehohanan and his colleagues.
and all their nakedness - Heb. מַעֲרֻמֵּיהֶם, an expression of (Ezek. 15: “naked (עֵרֹם) and bare.”

Verse 16

Verse 17

Verse 18

And Philistines raided the cities of the lowlands and the southland which was opposite them, as it is written about the Philistines, (Zeph. 2:5): "the inhabitants of the seacoast."

Verse 19

for he exposed Judah - Heb. הִפְרִיעַ, similar to (Exod. 32:25): "for Aaron had exposed them (פֻּרָעָה) (Jud. 5:2): "When breaches are made (בִּפְרֹעַ פְּרָעוֹת)."

Verse 20

came upon him for he had sent after him to aid him, as is written in II Kings (16:7): "And Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pilneser."
and oppressed him from that which he shared with him [from] the House of the Lord and the palace of the king, etc."

Verse 21

but he was of no help to him Even though we find in II Kings (ibid. verse 9): "and the king of Assyria went up to Damascus and seized it and exiled it[s inhabitants] to Kir, and slew Rezin," he was not much of an aid to him to strengthen him and to restore the cities that the Philistines had taken from him.

Verse 22

Verse 23

Verse 24

and he closed the doors of the House of the Lord so that the priests would not go to perform their service in the Tent of Meeting, but come to the altars that he erected on every corner in Jerusalem, and Hezekiah "opened the doors of the House of the Lord," (below 29:3) because his father had closed the doors of the House of the Lord.

Chapter 29

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

and reinforced them because Ahaz had destroyed all the vessels of the House of God.

Verse 4

Verse 5

and remove the ‘menstruant’ The Midrash Aggadah (source unknown) states: ‘The corpse’ is not stated here, but ‘the menstruant,’ which is more repugnant than the corpse. It is compared to the uncleanness of the menstruant, because menstrual blood is repugnant.

Verse 6

Verse 7

extinguished the lamps, and they did not burn incense nor offer up burnt offerings in the Sanctuary to the God of Israel but they made high places to alien gods in every city, to burn incense to them.

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

do not forget - Heb. תִּשְׁלוּ, an expression denoting lack of intention.

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

And the priests came within for the Levites may not enter within.
to the court of the House of the Lord the place where the Levites stood, as he says: “and the Levites received, etc.”

Verse 17

They commenced on the first of the first month etc., they sanctified the House of the Lord for eight days This is why they prolonged the cleansing to cleanse it so long, because Ahaz had painted all the walls with images, as it is written (Ezek. 23:14): “Images of Chaldeans, engraved with types of drawings,” and they prolonged it for eight days until they destroyed the likeness of the images from the walls, and on the sixteenth day of the month, they completed everything, the Temple and the forecourt.

Verse 18

Verse 19

we have prepared and sanctified This is explained in Abodah Zarah (52b) in the chapter entitled “Rabbi Ishmael”: May vessels used in the Onias temple be used in the Temple?...He questioned him, “’That King Ahaz forsook, etc....we have prepared and sanctified.’ Does not ‘we have prepared’ mean that they immersed them and ‘sanctified’ mean that they consecrated them?” He replied, “Blessed are you to Heaven, for you have restored my loss to me. ‘We have prepared’ means that we have concealed them and ‘sanctified’ means that we consecrated others in their stead.”

Verse 20

Verse 21

and seven kids, etc. This was a temporary provision.
on the altar of the Lord but not on those altars that his father Ahaz had made.

Verse 22

Verse 23

Verse 24

to atone for all Israel for they had sinned by [practicing] idolatry. The king said as follows: “Let the burnt offerings and the sin offerings be for all Israel.” In the section פִּנְחָס (Num. 16:24) it is written: “the entire congregation shall offer up one bull, etc.,” and it is written: (Lev 4:14): “and the congregation shall bring a young bull for a sin offering,” and here it is written that they brought seven bulls, rams, lambs, and kids! This was a temporary ruling.

Verse 25

for by the hand of the Lord was the commandment, by the hand of His prophets that the Levites should play musical instruments. It is not written in the Torah that a sacrifice requires musical accompaniment (lit., song), but it is the commandment of the Lord, which He commanded through His prophets to accompany the sacrifice with song. Our Rabbis explained in Tractate Arachin (11a): From where do we derive that the Levites are required to play musical instruments? For it is written (Num. 4:47): "the service of the service." Which is a service that requires another service with it? This is music with a musical instrument. "And the service of raising" may also be correctly explained in reference to song, as it is written (I Chron. 15:22): "And Chenaniah, the leader of the Levites in song (בְּנָשָׂא) etc. because he was an expert," for he was appointed to raise the voice of the melody of the song.

Verse 26

and the priests with the trumpets as it is written (Num. 10:8): "And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall blow the trumpets."

Verse 27

Verse 28

Verse 29

Verse 30

to praise the Lord with the words of David and Asaph the seer i.e., "Give thanks to the Lord, call out in His name," as is written above (I Chron. 16:8f): "On that day, David placed Nathan at the head to give thanks to the Lord by the hand of Asaph and his brethren, etc."

Verse 31

and the congregation brought [peace] offerings and thanksgiving offerings which are permissible for the owner to eat.
and every generous-hearted one - burnt offerings Some of them, whoever was moved by his heart, brought burnt-offerings, but not all of them [i.e., not all the people brought burnt-offerings], because the owner has no permission to eat them.

Verse 32

Verse 33

And the sacred offerings sacred offerings of the lower degree - [thanksgiving-] offerings and peace-offerings, from which the owners may benefit.

Verse 34

Only the priests were few i.e., Those who had consecrated themselves were still few; so their kinsmen, the Levites, reinforced them until the work was completed and until the priests consecrated themselves. Now, should you ask: How was it that the Levites consecrated themselves and the priests did not consecrate themselves? Scripture explains: "for the Levites were more conscientious than the priests to consecrate themselves"; the Levites were more conscientious than the priests, for the priests and the Levites and all God-fearing people had disguised themselves and made themselves appear unrecognizable, and had even hidden, all the days of the wicked kings, and when Hezekiah - who was righteous - came, they could not immediately consecrate themselves and cleanse themselves, for this was in the first year of his reign; so they came and consecrated themselves gradually, as it is written (Prov. 28:12): "When the righteous rejoice, there is much glory, but when the wicked rise up, a person disguises himself," and it is written (ibid. verse 28): "When the wicked rise up, people hide; but when they perish, the righteous increase." When the wicked Ahaz rose up, people hid, but when he perished, the righteous increased, i.e., Hezekiah and his company.

Verse 35

Verse 36

over that which God had prepared for the people to serve Him and to do His will, similar to below (30:19): "His whole heart he set to seek, etc.," and they also rejoiced because they were suddenly inspired in the first year of his reign to return to the Lord, and they returned immediately.

Chapter 30

Verse 1

and he also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, etc. because they were not yet exiled, because this was in the first year of his reign and they were not exiled until the sixth year of his reign as it is written (II Kings 18:10): "And they captured it at the end of three years, in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea, king of Israel," as you will find at the end of the Book.

Verse 2

Verse 3

For they could not perform it at that time in the first month, in Nissan. for the priests had not consecrated themselves sufficiently They had not consecrated themselves sufficiently for Israel to offer their Passover sacrifices, and it goes without saying that they could not perform it in Nissan, for they did not finish consecrating the Temple until the sixteenth of Nissan, but this is its meaning: For they could not perform it at that time; i.e., even if they had not delayed the purification of the Temple, which they did not complete until the sixteenth of Nissan, they would not have been able to perform it now [the offering of the

Passover sacrifice] because not enough priests had consecrated themselves.
and the people had not gathered all of them [had not] yet [gathered] to Jerusalem.

Verse 4

Verse 5

from Beersheba to Dan This is the boundary of the Ten Tribes.
because for many years The meaning is that many years had passed in which they had not performed it according to its law.

Verse 6

so that He may return to the remnant that has escaped from the clutches of the kings of Assyria Although they had not yet been exiled, he calls them a remnant that has escaped because they considered themselves as if they had already been exiled, and moreover, the kings of Assyria had seized everything in the days of Ahaz, and the reason they saw themselves as if they had already been exiled was that for six years the Israelites were tribute-paying serfs to the king of Assyria, and he ruled over them and led them away into exile and did with them as he wished. This occurred within those six years, and they had already been exiled many times in the days of the kings of Israel and Ahaz, and they knew that as soon as Israel would rebel against the king of Assyria, he would lead them away in exile. He calls them ‘those who escaped from Assyria’ because he ruled neither over them, nor over the entire land of Judah.

Verse 7

And do not be like your fathers or like your brothers The meaning is: Now if you say, “We still trust that the king of Assyria will withdraw from us,” do not be like your fathers, every generation that was before you. What happened to them when they forsook the Lord and acted treacherously? “He made them a desolation, as you see.”

Verse 8

Verse 9

For when you return to the Lord, your brothers and your sons will find compassion before their captors and shall return to this land Even those few who have already been exiled, for they waged war with Israel and they overwhelmed them, and they led their sons and daughters into captivity. But if you return to Him, He will grant them compassion before their captors, that they will return to this land, for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful.

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

the altars for incense a place where there were priests and Levites.

Verse 15

and the priests and the Levites were embarrassed that they had delayed to consecrate themselves. They tarried so long and did not come until now for the following reason: they could not believe that this was true beforehand, because Ahaz had dismissed them from officiating as priests. And so they said, “Is it possible that yesterday Ahaz worshipped idols, and that his son Hezekiah, immediately in the first year and first month would tell the priests and Levites to worship the one God alone and have need of us?” They were therefore lazy and neglected to come, together with the rest of Judah, whom Ahaz had dismissed. But when they investigated and understood that everything was for the name of Heaven, they all came and consecrated themselves.

Verse 16

the priests sprinkled For [the rituals] from the reception [of the blood] and onwards are the commandments of the priests, and do not wonder why the owners themselves did not slaughter [the sacrifices], as is explained further: for there were many among the congregation who had not consecrated themselves and the Levites presided over the slaughter of their Passover sacrifices.

Verse 17

for everyone who was unclean a Levite took his place to sanctify it for the Lord.

Verse 18

for they ate the Passover sacrifice not as it is written not in accordance with halachah, for they ate it in a state of uncleanness, for Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, etc.

Verse 19

who has set his whole heart So it is explained in the Baraitha of Rabbi Eleazar the son of Rabbi Jose the Galilean which commences: Wherever you find the words of Rabbi Eleazar the son of Rabbi Jose the Galilean in Aggadah, listen attentively, as it is said (Prov. 2:2): “To make your ear attentive to wisdom” of the thirty-two methods by which the Aggadah is expounded, and this is one of them:. If the sequence was separated, e.g. this one: The good Lord will atone for anyone who has set his whole heart to seek God to perform His Passover sacrifice, to offer up his sacrifice—even though they did not offer it with the purity of sacred things, for they had not purified themselves; the entire Judah had purified themselves because they were near Jerusalem, and they could cleanse

themselves and consecrate themselves and return to Jerusalem, but many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun were not so much to blame in the matter, because the matter was far away for them through letters, and they did not have time to wait and to delay their coming until they consecrated themselves. They therefore came and were not purified. And because it was not their fault, therefore atone for them. Similarly, (Isa. 35:1f.): "Desert and wasteland shall rejoice over them, etc.": the sequence is separated.

Verse 20

Verse 21

and the priests with powerful instruments with trumpets.

Verse 22

who were experts in the service of the Lord it is appropriate to use the term "expertise" (שֵׂכֶל) in regards to song, as it is written, (above I Chron. 26:14): "And the lot to the east fell to Shelemiah, and Zechariah, his son, a prudent counselor, etc.," (יוֹעֵץ בְּשֵׂכֶל). Hezekiah spoke to their hearts with consolations and pleasant words to encourage them and assist them, in order that they too strengthen the song with expertise for the Lord.
and thanking the Lord over the thanksgiving offerings, and they thanked the Lord for the miracle that He had wrought for them, for the thanksgiving offering comes for a miracle.

Verse 23

another seven days as it is explained: and they kept seven days of joy.

Verse 24

separated from his small cattle and from his large cattle.
for the congregation one thousand bulls, etc. and they were eating together, the king, the officers, and the people, with joy.

Verse 25

Verse 26

for since the days of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, there had not been the like in Jerusalem It is possible that a greater multitude had come for the festival to Jerusalem in the days of Solomon, but there had never been such a great rejoicing as this in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon. They were joyful about this [gathering], for if they had gathered in Jerusalem on every festival, it would have been nothing new and they would have had no cause for [special] joy But now, since they had not performed the festival pilgrimage to Jerusalem all the days of Ahaz and the wicked kings of Judah, and they were now permitted to go up to Jerusalem they rejoiced greatly. And since it was so many years since they had gone to Jerusalem, the seven days of the Festival of Matzoth were too few in their eyes and they added another seven days in which to rejoice, and they rejoiced a great rejoicing.

Verse 27

and they blessed the people If you wish, you may say that they blessed them with this [blessing] that they begged to return from the land of their captors, and the Lord hearkened to their voice and returned them. Another possible explanation: and He hearkened to their voice, and so it is written above (v. 20): “and the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah and healed the people.”

Chapter 31

Verse 1

Verse 2

each man according to his service the priests to minister, and the Levites to be singers and gate sentries, and every man at his proper service.

Verse 3

And the king’s portion from his possessions for the burnt-offerings, etc. which he (willingly) gave to perform them.

Verse 4

And he commanded the inhabitants of Jerusalem, etc. in order that they be strengthened in the Law of the Lord with greater enthusiasm. Moreover, as long as their sustenance will be provided, they will be able to perform and occupy themselves with the Law of the Lord, because the Law was given only to those who ate manna, and secondly, to those who eat the heave-offering (Mechilta, Beshallach 17, Tanh. Beshallach 20).

Verse 5

And when the word burst forth from the king’s mouth to give a portion to the priests and the Levites, the Children of Israel increased the first of corn, wine, oil, honey date honey.
and all the increase of the field But all these [aforementioned] are not of the grain of the field, but so it is explained in Tractate Nedarim, in the chapter, “Whoever vows [to abstain] from herbs, is permitted to partake of pumpkins,” (55a): Rav Josef questioned: “And when the word burst forth, the Children of Israel increased, etc.” Now if you say that all these [i.e., all plants that are stacked up] are included in the term גָּדִישׁ, what is the meaning of “when the word burst forth”? Replied Abbaye: This is to include fruit of trees and vegetables....Replied Rava: תְּבוּאָה (grain) is one thing, and תְּבוּאַת שָׂדֶה (increase of the field) is another.

Verse 6

and the tithes of sacred things consecrated to the Lord the tithe of the tithe, which the Levites give the priests (Num. 18:25f.).
and they gave many stacks עֲרֵמוֹת עֲרֵמוֹת (houffen, Middle High German, heaps), an example is (Song 7:3): “a stack of (עֲרֵמַת) wheat.”

Verse 7

they commenced to lay the foundations of the stacks The beginning of anything is called a foundation, like the foundation of a house, which is the beginning of the structure, and like the verse in Ezra (7:9) "that is the commencement of (יְסַד) the ascent, etc."

Verse 8

and they blessed the Lord Who inspired Israel to separate their heave-offerings and their tithes.

Verse 9

And Hezekiah demanded Since Hezekiah saw that the stacks were large, he said to himself, "Perhaps the priests and the Levites have not taken [their share] from them and have not touched them, for had they touched them, how could they be so large? Since he was puzzled, he questioned them concerning the stacks, "What is the reason for this?"

Verse 10

And Azariah...said to him He lived in the days of Uzziah.
"From the beginning of bringing the heave-offering We have surely eaten, and not an incidental meal but we ate, were satisfied, and left over. Now what you are surprised about, that we ate four months, and nevertheless, their stacks are so large - this is because the Lord blessed His people and gave them abundant grains; therefore, they increased our heave-offerings and tithes.
and what is left over from this eating of ours.
is this abundance that you see: many stacks.

Verse 11

to prepare the chambers in the House of the Lord in which to deposit the heave-offerings.

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17

And the priests who traced their genealogy to the house of their fathers, and the Levites with the genealogy of their infants, their wives, their

sons, and their daughters. They would supply their sustenance from the heave-offerings and the tithes for that entire congregation. All these whom we mentioned [would supply food] to those who stood in the forecourt, and also to the sons of Aaron, the priests whose watch had not yet come about in which to minister, and who were in the field of the open land of their cities, in every city.

Verse 18

Verse 19

were men who were mentioned by names Above (verses 12ff.) Conaniah and his brethren were appointed over them to receive the portions: the heave-offerings and the tithes from the Israelites to distribute the portions to every male among the priests and the Levites
to every male among the priests and also to their wives, their sons, and their daughters. The Chronicler says "to every male" here to teach something remarkable, i.e., they would provide even to the young male children, as above (verse 16): "of the males from three years old and over," and they would surely provide for their wives, sons and daughters.

Chapter 32

Verse 1

After these deeds of integrity, etc. and planned to make a breach therein - Heb. לְבָקְעָם like לְבָקְעָם like (Amos 2: "For selling (מִכְרָם) [an innocent man] for money," like (מָכְרָם) and adjacent to that, (ibid. 1:13): "Because they ripped up (בִּקְּעָם) the pregnant women of Gilead," and its meaning and examples of it are (Isa. 7:6): "and let us breach its walls (וְנִבְקָעֶנָּה)," and (Gen. 22:3): "Then he split (וַיְבַקַּע) wood for the burnt-offering."

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

and he reinforced the millo An example is (I Kings 11:27): "built the millo."
and he made many swords - Heb. שֶׁלַּח, weapons, similar to (above 23:10): "each one with his sword (וּשְׁלָחוֹ) in his hand"; (Neh. 4:17): "each man took his sword (וּשְׁלָחוֹ) to the water."

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

In what do you trust It is written (I Kings 18:5): “He trusted in the Lord God of Israel,” and it is also written there: (verse 7) “and he rebelled against the king of Assyria.” Therefore, he asked, “In what do you trust” that you have rebelled against me?
stay in the siege in Jerusalem as it is written (here): “to die by famine and thirst.”

Verse 11

Verse 12

Did not he - Hezekiah - who trusts in his God, did he not transgress? Now even if He had the ability to help him, He would not help him, because he sinned against Him, for he removed His high places and His altars, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem: Before one altar you shall prostrate yourselves Now is it not preferable that the Judeans prostrate themselves before one altar and the Jerusalemites before one, or two and more? What does one altar avail such a large people? For they thought that all those high places that he had removed, as above (31:1): “and cut off the asherim, etc.” were built in the name of the God of Israel.

Verse 13

Verse 14

whom my fathers destroyed Pul, the king of Assyria, and Tiglath-Pilneser.

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17

And he wrote letters to blaspheme the Lord, the God of Israel And in II Kings (19:14) and in Isaiah (37:14) it is written: “And Hezekiah took the letters from the hand of the messengers and read it; he went up to the House of the Lord, and Hezekiah spread it out before the Lord.”

Verse 18

with a loud voice in Judean, etc. to frighten them and to terrify them
Here he relates the matter in generalities, but in II Kings (19) and in Isaiah (37) it is thoroughly elaborated upon.

Verse 19

And they spoke of the God of Jerusalem The author of this Book complains about the villain Sennacherib, who blasphemed the living God.
as of the gods of the peoples of the land which are the handiwork of man, and they compared the God, our Maker, Who formed everything, to the gods of the peoples, who are their own handiwork, as is written above (v. 14): "Who is it among all the gods of, etc. that your God should be able to save you from my hand?"

Verse 20

And Hezekiah... prayed In II Kings (19:15–19) and in Isaiah (37:15–19) the prayer is delineated.

Verse 21

and some of his own issue as it is written (Isa. 37:38): "and his sons slew him with the sword."

Verse 22

Verse 23

Verse 24

and he prayed to the Lord as is delineated in II Kings (20:3).
and he spoke to him What is the sign?
and he gave him a sign (ibid. verse 9ff.) "This is your sign, etc." Everything is delineated there.

Verse 25

But...did not repay Him according to that which He had bestowed upon him Hezekiah did not repay the Holy One, blessed be He in accordance with that which He had bestowed upon him by healing him.
for his heart became haughty as it is written (ibid. 20:13): "and he showed them his entire treasure-house...and in all his kingdom."
and there was wrath upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem because of this, and the author of this Book abridged it here because it is described in II Kings (20) and in Isaiah (39).

Verse 26

And Hezekiah became humbled when his heart was haughty as it is written there: "And Hezekiah said to Isaiah: [The word of the Lord that you have spoken is] good." And when he became humble, the wrath did not come upon them in his days.

Verse 27

and for all precious vessels he made various kinds of treasure-houses.

Verse 28

And storehouses for the increase Regarding storehouses of increase [of grain] it is appropriate to use the term מַסְכְּנוֹת, storehouses, in all places, like (Exod. 1:11): "store cities (עָרֵי מַסְכְּנוֹת) for Pharaoh," and so, (above 8:4): "And he built Tadmor in the desert and all the store cities (עָרֵי מַסְכְּנוֹת) that he built in Hamath," and perforce, they were for grain, because in the desert he did not have to store gold and silver.
and stalls for all kinds of beasts - Heb. וְאֻרוֹת, large stables.

Verse 29

Verse 30

and he led them straight down on the west He led them along a straight way down on the west to the City of David.

Verse 31

And so, because of the emissaries of Heb. בְּמֻלְיְצֵי, messengers, similar to (Gen. 42:23): "for the interpreter (הַמֵּלִיץ) was between them" because the messenger is the liaison between the sender and the one to whom he is sent. This is related to the verse that states: "and Hezekiah prospered in all his work," and after all this good, which the Holy One, blessed be He, had bestowed on him, God forsook him to test him, to know what was in his heart through the emissaries of the officers of Babylon, who were sent to him.
to seek the sign that was in the land He did not stand up to the test, and he showed them the weakness of his whole house. The verse is to be explained as if the phrases are reversed.

Verse 32

Verse 33

in the best - Heb. בְּמַעֲלֶה, in the best, as is explained at the end of the first chapter of Baba Kamma (16b).

Chapter 33

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

“In Jerusalem, My name shall be forever” Scripture decries Manasseh, who built altars to pagan deities in the very House concerning which the Holy One, blessed be He, said, “I wish My name to rest there.” The verse stated after this (verse 7) is also an expression of decrying: “And he placed the graven image of the idol that he made in the House of God, concerning which, etc.” And also the verse (8): “And I will not continue to remove Israel’s feet, etc.”

Verse 5

Verse 6

and those who divine by the jidoa bone - Heb. יִדְּעוֹנִי spelled in full with a “vav,” because he did much [evil], and he added to the graven image of the idol that he made. They would take the bone of an animal known as jidoa, and place it in their mouths, whence it would speak.

Verse 7

forever - Heb. לְעֵילוֹם, [a variant of] לְעוֹלָם.

Verse 8

And I will not continue to remove Israel’s feet This refers back to the above verse, and all is a complaint; i.e., the Holy One, blessed be He, said, “So I said to David and to Solomon, ‘In this House I will place My name forever,’ and I also promised him, ‘And I will not continue to remove Israel’s feet from the land, if they will but observe, etc.’” But now And Manasseh led astray, etc. Because of him the Shechinah departed, and we are also still in exile because of him.

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

of Gihon in the valley beside the valley of Gihon, the name of a place.

and he surrounded the Ophel And he surrounded from there the strength of the towers built with the work of Ophel.

Verse 15

and he cast them outside but he neither broke them nor hid them from the eye. Therefore, his son went astray after them, as it is written (below verse 22): “and to all the graven images that [Manasseh his father] had made,” for he took them from the place where he had cast them.

Verse 16

and he sacrificed upon it peace-offerings and thanksgiving offerings He brought a thanksgiving offering and thanked the Holy One, blessed be He, for restoring him to Jerusalem and to his kingdom.

Verse 17

Verse 18

Verse 19

and his prayer how he prayed.
and its acceptance and his return to his kingdom.

Verse 20

and they buried him in his house Like “in his house.” In II Kings (21:18) it is written: “in the garden of his house.” He did not merit to be buried with his forefathers.

Chapter 34

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

when he was still a youth, he started to seek The meaning is that although he was still a youth, he started to seek after the God of David his father. This is similar to (Gen. 37:2): “and as a youth, with the sons of Bilhah, etc., Joseph brought evil reports of them,” and this is not surprising, but if he were thirty years old, he would not have done it. It is, however, surprising, that he (Josiah) was a youth, and nevertheless, he started to seek, etc.
he started to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the asherim that Manasseh had made and that Amon his son had renewed, as above (33:3): “And he rebuilt the high places that Hezekiah his father had demolished, etc.”

Verse 4

and the sun images images of the sun.
that were above That they had placed above them, on high, opposite the sun, and they would prostrate themselves to it. Manasseh had done all this, as it is written above (33:3): "and he prostrated himself to the entire host of the heaven, and he worshipped them."
and he cast them upon the graves Here was fulfilled what he said to Jeroboam, (I Kings 13:2): "so said the Lord, 'Behold a son will be born to the house of David, Josiah will be his name, and upon you will he sacrifice, etc., and human bones, etc.'"

Verse 5

Verse 6

And in the cities of Manasseh and Ephraim, etc. from those "gleanings" [survivors] who survived the sword and the captivity of Sennacherib.
with their instruments of destruction Since they were but few "gleanings," they feared to live in the lowland and established their houses on the mountain (בְּחָרְבָּתֵיהֶם)).

Verse 7

Verse 8

the recorder Wherever a scribe is mentioned, a recorder is mentioned in close proximity, for every king had a scribe to write everything that occurred in the kingdom, whether favorable or unfavorable, and he had a recorder sitting beside the scribe, to mention every incident, and the scribe would write according to what he told him.

Verse 9

which the Levites who guarded the threshold had gathered from the hands of Manasseh and Ephraim, etc. from their ruins round about.

Verse 10

to mend and repair - Heb. לִבְדּוֹק. (Gen 42:9): "to see the nakedness (עֶרְוַת) of the land," is translated into Aramaic as "to see the crack (בְּדָקָא)" of the land.

Verse 11

and wood for the couplings - Spangen in Middle High German, clasps.
and to make beams - Traver in Old French, to provide with beams.

Verse 12

to direct - Heb. לְנַצֵּחַ, lemestriyer, to direct, supervise, and so (Ezra 3:8): "to direct (לְנַצֵּחַ) the work of the House of the Lord," and likewise (above 2:17): "and six hundred overseers (מְנַצְּחִים)."
and the Levites, all who were expert - Heb. מֵבִין. The term expertise (הֲבָנָה) is universally mentioned regarding song, and so above (I Chron.

25:8), when they cast lots, it is written: “like the small one so the great one, expert (מֵבִין) with pupil.” And likewise, (ibid. verse 7): “trained in song to the Lord: every expert (מֵבִין),” and it is written (ibid. 15:22): “And Chananiah, the leader of the Levites, etc., because he was an expert (מֵבִין),” and he was appointed over them to chastise [them] in raising [the voice], how they should raise [their voice], because he was an expert (מֵבִין).

Verse 13

and of the Levites, scribes to write down the [amount of] silver brought to the House of the Lord and how they had collected it.
and officers over the work.

Verse 14

the Scroll of the Law of the Lord by the hand of Moses the Book of Deuteronomy.

Verse 15

and Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan because it was the scribe’s duty to read everything before the king.

Verse 16

and he further brought back word to the king for he first reported to the king about the errand that the king had sent him on to repair the House of the Lord his God, as is written above (verse 8): “he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, etc.”

Verse 17

And they poured - Heb. וַיַּתִּיכוּ, they poured, like (Gen. 28:18): “and he poured (וַיִּיצֹק) oil” and the Targum renders: וְאַתִּיךְ

Verse 18

And Shaphan the scribe told the king After bringing back word to the king regarding his errand, he gave him the message of Hilkiah the priest, and read the scroll before him.

Verse 19

that he rent his garments When he heard them reading (Deut. 28:36): “The Lord will lead you and the king, etc.,” he interpreted [the following words] as referring to himself: “whom you will appoint over yourself.” The people had made him king, and he was not a prince by the word [of God].

Verse 20

Verse 21

which has been poured upon us Since wrath is [compared to] fire, the term pouring applies to it, and a similar instance is below (verse 25): “My wrath shall be poured down upon this place, and it shall not be quenched.”

Verse 22

to Huldah the prophetess Our Sages (Meg. 14b) explained that since a woman is more merciful than a man, he did not send them to Jeremiah the prophet.
the keeper of the raiment If you wish, you may say that this is either the priestly raiment or the royal raiment.
and she was sitting in Jerusalem in the study-hall - Heb. בַּמִּשְׁנֶה. The city had two walls, and she lived between the two walls. The Targum renders: in the study-hall. The meaning is: in the place of Torah, for Huldah had a chamber adjacent to the Chamber of Hewn Stone. The Chamber of Huldah was open to the outside and closed toward the Sanhedrin in the Chamber of Hewn Stone. So it is written in Tractate Middoth (unknown) because of modesty.

Verse 23

Say to the man He wished to interrupt the prophecy of the people "upon this place and upon its inhabitants," and when he finished that prophecy, he then delineates, "And concerning the king of Judah, who sent you," and he deals briefly with the prophecy of the palace and its inhabitants and puts it aside and focuses upon the prophecy of the king, which is long.

Verse 24

Verse 25

Verse 26

Verse 27

Verse 28

and you shall be gathered to your graves in peace But was he not slain? It [means] in peace from this, that your eyes will not see all the evil that I am bringing upon this place and upon its inhabitants, i.e., the destruction of the Temple.

Verse 29

Verse 30

the Scroll of the Covenant All the fright that the king experienced was due to the words (Deut. 28: 36): "The Lord will lead you," and he saw that the Torah called it a covenant: "These are the words of the covenant." Therefore, he too enacted a covenant and saw written immediately following it (ibid. 29:8): "And you shall keep the words, etc., and practice them." Josiah also saw written immediately following (ibid. verses 9ff.): "You are standing today, all of you, etc....your

children, your wives...that you should pass into the covenant...enacts with you today.” He said, “In such a manner, I too shall enact a covenant, for there it is written: ‘You are standing, etc.’ I too [will do so], ‘And he caused all those found in Jerusalem, both small and great, to stand.’”
with all his heart and with all his soul as he found written there, (Deut. 30:2): “And you will return to the Lord your God, etc. with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Verse 31

in his place An expression of וַיַּעֲמֹד, standing.

Verse 32

according to the covenant of God, the God of their forefathers According to all that which is written there: “the God of their forefathers.” Therefore, it is written here, “the God of their forefathers,” which He enacted for their forefathers in the desert. And every covenant that is there concerns idolatry, as it is written (Deut. 29:16f.): “And you saw their abominations and their depravities, etc....turns away today from the Lord.” Therefore, Josiah “removed all the abominations, etc.”

Chapter 35

Verse 1

And Josiah made the Passover sacrifice in Jerusalem since none of the wicked kings of Judah had made the Passover sacrifice according to its law.

Verse 2

Verse 3

Place the Holy Ark According to its simple meaning, [they were to return it to its place] because Manasseh and Amon had removed the Holy Ark and placed their graven images in its place, as is proven above (33:7) concerning Manasseh: “And he placed the graven image of the idol, etc.” Therefore, Josiah commanded to return it and to place the Ark in the place that Solomon had built for it, but our Rabbis said (Yoma 42b) that he commanded the Levites to hide it there.
you have no burden on the shoulders This is another argument and the beginning of a statement. He said to them. You have no more toil of carrying a burden on your shoulders, i.e., all the vessels of the House of the Lord. You can no longer say, “Because of the toil of the burdens on our shoulders, we cannot serve the Lord and His people.” Therefore, from now on, serve the Lord your God with song and His people Israel by slaughtering and flaying their Passover sacrifices, as is proven below (verse 6): “And slaughter the Passover sacrifice and prepare yourselves, etc.”

Verse 4

Verse 5

according to the divisions in divisions to make the Passover sacrifice according to its law, according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

Verse 6

Verse 7

And Josiah separated for the members of the people - Heb. וַיָּרֶם. An example is (Num. 18: 28): "So shall you too separate (תָּרִימוּ)," an expression of separation.
for all that were present He separated small cattle for the Passover sacrifices for all the Israelites present.
for the number of thirty thousand of small cattle, of lambs, and goats.
and large cattle—three thousand for Festival peace offerings.

Verse 8

Verse 9

Verse 10

Verse 11

Verse 12

Verse 13

And they cooked the Passover sacrifice with fire according to the law Exod. 12:8): "Roasted with fire."
and carried them quickly to all the members of the people [i.e.] the Levites [did this]; and after they had prepared for all Israel, the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, who did not have time to prepare.

Verse 14

Verse 15

the king's seer Each one was a seer.

Verse 16

Verse 17

Verse 18

And such a Passover sacrifice had not been made In II Kings (23:22) it is written: “For such a Passover sacrifice had not been performed since the time of the judges,” since the day that Israel was divided into two kingdoms, when the ten tribes separated from the kings of Judah and crowned a king over themselves. For all the time that they were two nations, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin made a Passover sacrifice for the sake of the Lord in Jerusalem, and these [made one] for the sake of pagan deities in Beth-El and in Dan. And this did not occur all the days of the judges, until Israel was divided into two families, and every generation had only one judge, and that judge would compel them to walk in the way of the Lord, as is explained in Judges (2:18): “and the Lord was with the judge and saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge.” And all the ten tribes would go to Shiloh and make a Passover sacrifice for the sake of the Lord. But such a Passover sacrifice had not been made all the days of the kings of Israel and Judah, that they should make a Passover sacrifice together. But in the days of Josiah, when the kingdom of the ten tribes had already ceased to exist, for since Jeremiah had returned the ten tribes, they did not crown another king, but Josiah reigned over them, and they all made a Passover sacrifice together in Jerusalem. This is the meaning of: “such a Passover sacrifice had not been performed...to the Lord in Jerusalem.” This interpretation, however, misleads me very much, and does not appear correct to me, for although Jeremiah had returned the ten tribes and Josiah reigned over them in Jerusalem, how is it possible that they did not make such a Passover sacrifice all the days of the judges and in the days of Samuel the Seer and in the days of David and Solomon, when Israel was dwelling in its land in peace and tranquility, and they had only one king, and their hearts were directed toward Heaven? Rather, this is the explanation, and this is the way Rabbi Eliezer the son of Rabbi Meshullam interpreted it to me: “And such a Passover sacrifice had not been made” ever, [it had never happened] that the king and the officers should supply enough animals for the Passover sacrifices and cattle for the festive peace offerings, and that he commanded the Levites to prepare for them and send each person according to how much he could eat.

Verse 19

Verse 20

After all this, that Josiah had prepared the Temple, Neco, the king of Egypt, went up Scripture decries and laments Josiah, for a miracle was not performed for him as it had been for Hezekiah, about whom it is written (32:1): “After these deeds of integrity, Sennacherib the king of Assyria came” upon Hezekiah, and a miracle was performed for him.
went up to wage war in Carchemish on the Euphrates against the king of Assyria. So it is written in (II) Kings (23:29), and he wished to pass to him through the land of Israel, and Pharaoh Neco could not go to him by the way of the Euphrates River unless he were to pass through Israel, for Egypt is south of the land of Israel, and the Euphrates River is north of the land of Israel.

went forth toward him for he interpreted (Lev. 26:6): “and a sword will not pass through your land” to mean that even peaceful armies passing through the land [to attack other countries] should not pass through your land, but he was unaware of “the sin of the scorners of the generation, who arose to set up [idolatrous symbols] behind the door,” [i.e., he did not know that his generation found but little favor in God’s eyes], as is explained in Tractate Taanith (22b)

Verse 21

Verse 22

and he did not hearken to the words of Neco from the mouth of God who said to him from the mouth of God, for so said Isaiah, (19:2): “And I will stir up Egyptians against Egyptians.” This is what the Kallir composed: “He withheld his troops from marching to Aram Naharaim, in order that no single sword should pass through Ephraim; and he did not hearken to the prophet to turn back, for it was decreed that Egyptian be set against Egyptian.”

Verse 23

Verse 24

into his second chariot for it was customary for the king to ride on two chariots; he rode mainly on the first, but if necessary, he would ride on the second. The first one went before them, and when he was stricken, they put him into the second chariot.

Verse 25

And all the male...singers - הַשָּׁרִים, an expression of song, choristers, for both song and lamentation are recited with the same voice. Concerning him, Amos prophesied (8:9): “and I will cause the sun to set at midday, and I will darken the land on a sunny day.” This is the day of Josiah, who died at the age of thirty-nine, in the middle of his days, for it is written (Ps. 90:10): “The days of our years because of them are seventy years,” and it is written (Amos 8:10): “And I will turn your festivals into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation, etc. and I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and its end like a bitter day.” This is what [the Chronicler] says: “And all the male and female singers said in their lamentations,” “and all of Judah and Jerusalem were mourning” for him.
and they made them a statute When any grief or weeping befalls them, for which they lament and weep, they mention this grief with it. An example is the Ninth of Av, in which we recite lamentations for those slain in the persecutions that occurred in our times. They will similarly bewail the day of Josiah’s death. An example is (Jud. 11:39f.): “and it became a statute in Israel, etc. to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, four days in a year.”
and behold, they are written in the lamentations in the Book of Lamentations.

Verse 26

and his kind deeds And in II Kings (23:25) it is written: “Now, before him there was no king like him.” This is what is stated here: “Behold they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.”

Chapter 36

Verse 1

and made him king instead of his father although Jehoiakim his brother was twenty-one months his senior.

Verse 2

Verse 3

And the king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem This is explained thoroughly in II Kings (23: 33): “And Pharaoh-Neco imprisoned him in Riblah in the land of Hamath.”
in Jerusalem from reigning in Jerusalem.
and he imposed a fine upon the land to give taxes. An example is (Deut. 22: 19): “And they shall fine him one hundred pieces of silver.”

Verse 4

and he changed his name to Jehoiakim It is the custom of kings and princes to bestow a by-name upon their servants as they wish. An example is (Gen. 41:45): “And Pharaoh named Joseph, etc.,” and so (Num. 13:16): “and Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua,” and so, (Dan. 1:7): “Now the chief officer gave them names, etc.” All this is to make known that he rules over him to name him as he desires.
and he changed his name to Jehoiakim Why did he change his name to Jehoiakim? It is explained above that after Pharaoh slew Josiah, he appointed a king and fined them by imposing a tribute of enslavement upon them.

Verse 5

Verse 6

Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon advanced upon him because Pharaoh could not go forth from his land, as it is written (II Kings 24:7): “And the king of Egypt no longer went out of his land, for the king of Babylonia had taken from the river of Egypt until the Euphrates River, all that belonged to the king of Egypt,” for he defeated him in the fourth year in Carchemish on the Euphrates River, as is delineated in Jeremiah (46:2).
to bring him to Babylon He did not actually bring him, however, but he died on the way, and they cast away his corpse, and so did Jeremiah prophesy (22:19): “A donkey’s burial shall he be buried, dragged and tossed past the gates of Jerusalem.” Now where is a donkey’s burial? In a dog’s stomach, and so it is apparent in II Kings (24:6): “And Jehoiakim slept with his forefathers,” but it is not written: “and they buried him.”

Verse 7

And some of the vessels of the House of the Lord And some of the vessels of the House of the Lord, and concerning this, Jeremiah prophesied (27:21): "For so said the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels remaining, etc." Seder Olam questions (Dan. 1:1): "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, etc. and the Lord delivered...into his hand." Here, however, it is apparent that it was in the eleventh year of his reign. Now what is the meaning of "in the third year"? Counting from his rebellion, for it is stated (II Kings 24:1): "and Jehoiakim was his vassal for three years, then he turned and rebelled against him" for three years, and in the third year of his rebellion, he advanced against him, and that is the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, for the master taught: In the first year [of his reign] he conquered Nineveh; in the second year he vanquished Jehoiakim, who served him for three years and rebelled against him for three years, and he did not reign until the fourth year of Jehoiakim, for it is stated (Jer. 25:1): "in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah - that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar."

Verse 8

and the abominations that he was intimate with his mother.
and that which was found upon him This alludes to a tattoo, [something found on the body].

Verse 9

Verse 10

And at the return of the year that Jehoiakim was exiled.
with the precious vessels of the House of the Lord the desirable things. Those he took, and the rest he left until the exile of Zedekiah. Then he took everything with him. And in II Kings (24:12), it is explained that "Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, came out to the king of Babylonia, etc." and he made Zedekiah his brother king Jehoiakim's brother, and so in II Kings (24:17), "And the king of Babylonia crowned Mattaniah his uncle in his stead and changed his name to Zedekiah," Jehoiachin's uncle.

Verse 11

Verse 12

And he did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord What is the evil? That he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, [who spoke] from the mouth of the Lord, as is explained in Jeremiah (38:17ff.): "And Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, 'So said the Lord God of Hosts, the God of Israel: If you go out, etc.'...'I fear the Jews, etc.'" But aside from this sin, he did not sin except insofar as he did not obey the words of the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord, and that he transgressed Nebuchadnezzar's oath. But he did not do "his abominations and that which was found in" Jehoiakim, i.e., the evil done by Jehoiakim. [This was heard] from Rabbi Eliezer the son of Rabbi Meshullam.

Verse 13

who adjured him by God as is explained in Ezekiel (17:12): “Say now to the rebellious house, etc.” The entire chapter was written regarding Jehoiachin and Zedekiah: (verse 13f.) “took its king and its princes, and brought them to him to Babylon,” refers to Jehoiachin and his company. “And he took of the royal seed and formed a covenant with him,” refers to Zedekiah.

Verse 14

Also, all etc. They should have instructed Israel, as it is written (Deut. 24:8): “in accordance with all that the priests, the Levites, instruct you.” This does not refer to simple priests, who have no power to protest, but to the chiefs of the priests, who have the power to protest, but they did not protest.
and they defiled the House of the Lord with their abominations.
which He had hallowed in Jerusalem to cause His glory to rest there forever.

Verse 15

And the Lord...sent upon them All this is an acknowledgment of divine justice, so that you should not say that He did not forewarn them to repent of their evil ways, as it is written: “grasped forever His anger and kept His fury forever (Amos 1:12).” Therefore, it is stated: “And the Lord God of their forefathers sent upon them through His messengers,” and forewarned them to repent of their evil, and not once a year or a month, but every day, “sending them with every fresh morn.”
for He had pity on His people and did not desire their death.
and on His abode on the abode of the Temple, for even a flesh and blood king has pity on his people and on his abode, not to destroy them.

Verse 16

But they mocked the messengers of God the messengers of the Holy One, blessed be He.
and despised His words [The words] of the Holy One, blessed be He, for surely He is just. No one mocks even messengers of a flesh and blood [king] and they are afraid to transgress his command, whether for bad or for good, but His people despised His words and mocked and scoffed at His messengers, etc.

Verse 17

And He brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans who were a lowly nation, as it is said (Isa. 23:13): “Behold the land of the Chaldees, this people has never been,” and here was fulfilled (Deut. 32:21): “They provoked Me with a non-god, etc....I will provoke them to anger with a vile nation.”
and he slew their young men by the sword in their Temple and their recompense was requited them, as is written above (verse 14): “and they defiled the House of the Lord,” and that which He said was fulfilled, (Ezek. 9:5ff.): “’and smite, let not your eye spare, etc....and go out,’ and they went out and smote in the city.”
and he had pity neither on youth nor virgin, elder nor ancient one unlike the custom of soldiers, who, when they are victorious in war, slay the combatants, but pity the elders, the youths, and the virgins, and are filled with compassion for them, and Moses’ prophecy was fulfilled (Deut. 32:25): “The sword will bereave from outside and terror from within, youth, etc.”

Verse 18

And all the vessels of the House of God, both large and small which were left over from the exiles of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah.

Verse 19

Verse 20

and they became vassals to him and to his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia And why until the kingdom of Persia? Because until that time, the land was not appeased for its Sabbaths, as it is written (Lev. 26:35): “As long as it is desolate, it will rest.”

Verse 21

until the land was appeased for its Sabbaths Because prior to that, the land was not appeased for its Sabbaths.
all the days of its desolation it rested until the completion of seventy years [corresponding to] the Sabbatical and Jubilee years that Israel had neglected to observe in the land, and corresponding to them they were exiled for seventy years. The land of Israel rested for those seventy years. The Israelites provoked [God] in their land for 430 years. These included 390 years from the time they entered the land until the ten tribes were exiled therefrom, and they are explained (as follows): 243 years from the time Jeroboam ascended the throne until Hoshea the son of Elah was exiled, and 111 years during the administration of the judges, when they provoked [Him], and the rest are obscure. That is what is stated in Ezekiel (4:4ff.): “And you shall lie on your left side, and you shall place the iniquity of the house of Israel, etc., 390 days, etc. And when you complete these, you shall lie on your right a second time, and you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah, 40 days, a day for a year, a day for a year.” This teaches that the house of Judah sinned from the time that the ten tribes were exiled until Jerusalem was destroyed, for 40 years. How so? Twenty-two years of Manasseh, as it is written (II Kings 21:3): “according to all that Ahab did,” and Ahab reigned 22 years (and he [Manasseh] repented for thirty-three years, totaling fifty-five years.) Add 2 years of Amon, and 11 of Jehoiakim, totaling thirty-five years, and this prophecy was transmitted to Ezekiel in the 5th year of Zedekiah, totaling 40 years. The sum total of them all, of both Israel and Judah, is 430 years. Note that there are 64 Sabbatical and Jubilee years in 400 years. There are 5 Sabbatical years in 35 years, totaling 69, and the last Jubilee year was counted for them as iniquity, for because of their iniquity they were exiled therefrom. Hence the 70 hallowed years of Shemittah that Israel did not observe. They were consequently exiled for seventy years to fulfill what was said, (Lev. 26:34): “Then the land will be appeased regarding its Sabbaths.” So it is explained in Seder Olam (see ch. 26). Chronicles is concluded with this since he says: “until the completion of seventy years.” He had to state these verses and those of Ezra (in the beginning) to let us know that when those seventy years were over, “the wheel rotated” and they returned to their land. He therefore said here: “in the first year of Cyrus, the king of Persia” until “Who among you is of all His people, etc., and he may ascend.” The reason that the “vav” [and] of “And in the first year” is added, is because the Book of Daniel intervenes, for the book of Ezra continues in sequence after the Book of Daniel, and this “vav” connects them together.”

Verse 22

the spirit of Cyrus his will.
and he issued a proclamation lie made an announcement to all his subjects.
and also in writing He sent to all his subjects, saying.

Verse 23

So said Cyrus, the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth For I reign as king over all the kingdoms.
and He commanded me And He commanded me through Isaiah to build Him a House in Jerusalem, as it is said (Isa. 44:2845:1): “Who says of Cyrus, etc. So said the Lord to His anointed one, to Cyrus.” And this prophecy of Isaiah had already been said to him.
which is in Judea Jerusalem is in the provinces of Judea.
Who among you is of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him, and he may ascend So was the proclamation to the provinces: Whoever is of the people of the Holy One, blessed be He, may come to build His House, which is in Jerusalem.
and he may ascend and may the Holy One, blessed be He, help him and us.